Commentary

Volume Sixty-one, Number Two, February 1976

Appeasement & Détente

THEODORE DRAPER

China, the U.S. & Soviet Expansionism

ROBERT S. ELEGANT

Palestine Before the Zionists David S. Landes

Fascism—The Second Coming Walter Laqueur

The Scandal of "Britannica 3" Samuel McCracken

In Defense of Sports William J. Bennett

MUSIC:
Records and Performances
Samuel Lipman

FICTION:
Why Potok is Popular
Daphne Merkin

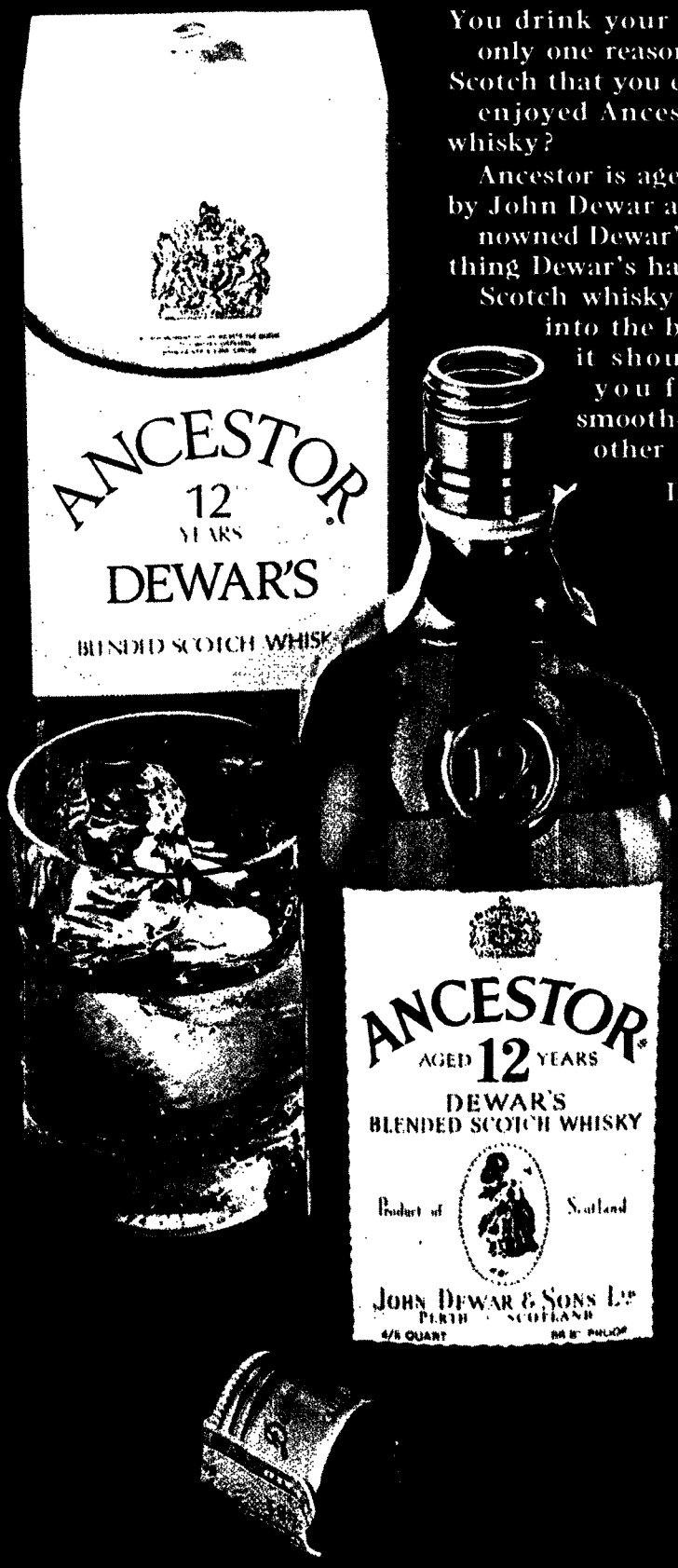
AN EXCHANGE:
Nuclear Weapons for Israel?
Robert W. Tucker & Critics

BOOKS IN REVIEW:
James Q. Wilson/ Diane Ravitch
Paul Auster
Chester E. Finn, Jr./ Michael Novak

PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE/ $1.50

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dewar's® has a rich Ancestor®.



You drink your 12-year-old Scotch for only one reason: it's a special taste in Scotch that you enjoy. But have you ever enjoyed Ancestor 12-year-old Scotch whisky?

Ancestor is aged, blended, and bottled by John Dewar and Sons, makers of renowned Dewar's "White Label." Everything Dewar's has learned about making Scotch whisky for over 100 years goes into the blending of Ancestor. So it shouldn't surprise you if you find Ancestor a little smoother, a little richer than other 12-year-olds.

Discover a rich Ancestor.

BLENDED SCOTCH WHISKY • 86.8 PROOF • ROSCHENLEY IMPORTS CO., N. Y., N. Y.

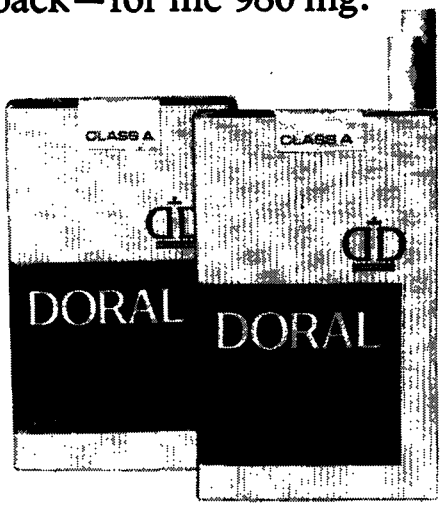
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"How I lost 980 mg. of 'tar' the first week... without losing out on taste."

©1976 R. J. REYNOLDS TOBACCO CO.

"Switching to a low 'tar' cigarette is no piece of cake if you're a menthol smoker like me. There just are not many low 'tar' menthols to choose from that taste good.

"So I was surprised when I tasted Doral Menthol. A terrific taste, and 7 milligrams less 'tar' than my old brand. That adds up to 140 mg. less 'tar' a pack—for me 980 mg. less 'tar' a week...on my Doral Diet."



Menthol or Regular.

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

MENTHOL: 13 mg. "tar", 1.0 mg. nicotine,
FILTER: 14 mg. "tar", 1.0 mg. nicotine, av. per cigarette, FTC Report SEPT. '75.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Commentary

VOLUME 61 NUMBER 2 *FEBRUARY 1976*

Articles
27 Appeasement & Détente *Theodore Draper*
39 China, the U.S. & Soviet Expansionism *Robert S. Elegant*
47 Palestine Before the Zionists *David S. Landes*
57 Fascism—The Second Coming *Walter Laqueur*

Observations
63 The Scandal of "Britannica 3" *Samuel McCracken*
68 In Defense of Sports *William J. Bennett*

Music
70 Records and Performances *Samuel Lipman*

Fiction
73 Why Potok is Popular *Daphne Merkin*

Letters
4 from *Yair Evron, Paul W. Schroeder, Stanley Hoffmann, Sidney Siegel, Adam Wiener, Leon Kogan,* and *Robert W. Tucker*

Books in Review
76 Can America Win the Next War?, by Drew Middleton *James Q. Wilson*
79 Idols of the Tribe, by Harold R. Isaacs *Diane Ravitch*
83 Speech-Grille and Selected Poems, by Paul Celan; Selected Poems, by Paul Celan; Paul Celan, by Jerry Glenn *Paul Auster*
87 Presidential Advisory Commissions, by Thomas R. Wolanin *Chester E. Finn, Jr.*
90 Against Our Will: Men, Women & Rape, by Susan Brownmiller *Michael Novak*

Editor: Norman Podhoretz
Executive Editor: Neal Kozodoy
Managing Editor: Marion Magid
Associate Editor: Brenda Brown
Contributing Editors: Robert Alter, Milton Himmelfarb, Walter Laqueur
Business Manager: Ronald Greene
Production Manager: Bruce Lodi
Cover: The Drawing Board, Inc.

COMMENTARY is published monthly by the American Jewish Committee—Single copy is $1.50, $15 a year; 3 years $40; 5 years $60—Add $4.00 per year for all foreign, including Canada and Latin America—Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices.

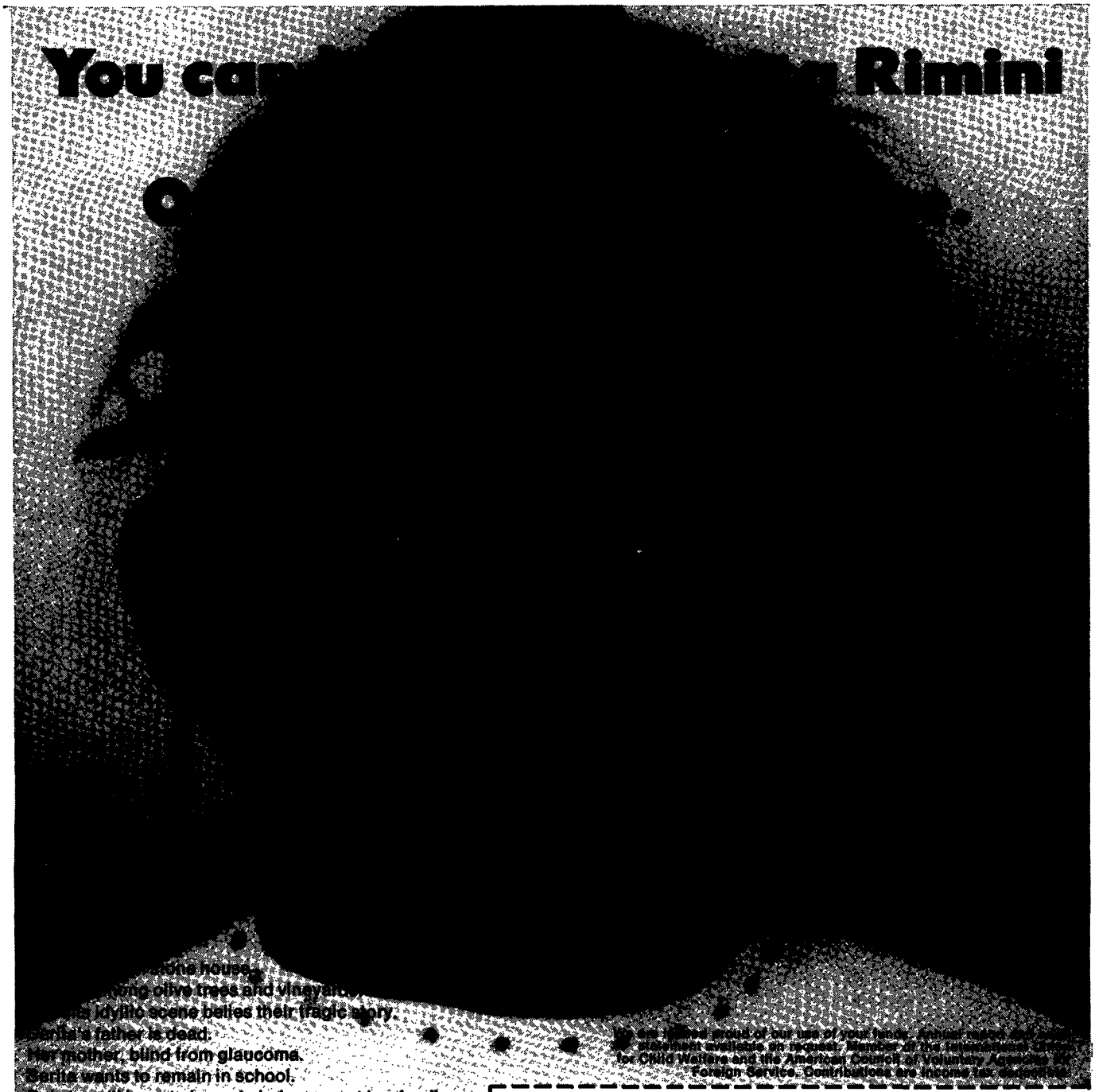
Copyright © 1976 by the American Jewish Committee; all rights reserved under International and Pan American Copyright Conventions.

Indexed in *Readers' Guide, Book Review Digest, Public Affairs Information Service, Index to Jewish Periodicals, ABC Pol Sci, Historical Abstracts,* and *America: History and Life*—Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed return envelope.
EDITORIAL & BUSINESS OFFICES: 165 E. 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022

The Commentary Publication Committee Edward E. Elson, *Chairman*
Norman Alexander / Donald M. Blinken / Charles D. Breitel / Theodore Ellenoff / Richard C. Ernst
Maurice Glinert / Robert H. Haines / Sydney M. Kaye / Lewis J. Laventhol / Richard Maass / Bess Myerson
Ned Pines / Frederick P. Rose / David Sher / John Slawson / Harry Steiner / Alan M. Stroock*
Laurence A. Tisch / Ben Touster / Gerard Weinstock **Honorary Member*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

You ca… Rimini



…one house.
…ong olive trees and vineyards.
…idyllic scene belies their tragic story.
…nita's father is dead.
Her mother, blind from glaucoma.
Serita wants to remain in school.
But she will have to leave to help support her family.
And she is only eight years old.

You can give a child like Serita that education so that she can grow up to live, not just exist. For $16 a month, through Save the Children Federation you can sponsor a child in many countries around the world and here at home. Combined with money from other sponsors, your $16 will help her and all the people in her community. With a desperately needed new school, child-care services, and vocational training. In simple terms, help a proud, hardworking people help themselves. This is what Save the Children has been all about since 1932.

For you—educated, involved, and in touch with your own heart—there are many rewards. Correspond with a child. Receive a photo and progress reports. Reach out to another human being. That's how Save the Children works. But without you it can't work. So please: clip this coupon and mail it today. Now you can turn the page.

…e are proud of our use of your funds. Annual report available on request. Member of the International Council for Child Welfare and the American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service. Contributions are income tax deductible.

I wish to contribute $16 a month to sponsor a ☐ boy ☐ girl ☐ either

☐ **Where the need is most urgent**

☐ Appalachia (U.S.)	☐ Indian (Latin America)	☐ Korea
☐ Bangladesh		☐ Lebanon
☐ Colombia	☐ Indian (U.S.)	☐ Mexico
☐ Dominican Republic	☐ Inner Cities (U.S.)	☐ Rural South (U.S.)
☐ Honduras	☐ Israel	☐ Tanzania

Enclosed is my first payment:

☐ $16 monthly	☐ $96 semi-annually
☐ $48 quarterly	☐ $192 annually

☐ Instead of becoming a sponsor, I am enclosing a contribution of $_____.

☐ Please send me more information.

NAME_____ TEL. NO._____

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____ STATE_____ ZIP_____

David L. Guyer, Executive Director

SAVE THE CHILDREN FEDERATION

Westport, Connecticut 06880 CT 2/6

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Statement of Aims

In sponsoring COMMENTARY, the American Jewish Committee aims to meet the need for a journal of significant thought and opinion on Jewish affairs and contemporary issues. Its pages will be hospitable to diverse points of view and belief, and it hopes to encourage original creative endeavor in the various fields of culture. The opinions and views expressed by COMMENTARY's contributors and editors are their own, and do not necessarily express the Committee's viewpoint or position. The sponsorship of COMMENTARY by the Committee is in line with its general program to enlighten and clarify public opinion on problems of Jewish concern, to fight bigotry and protect human rights, and to promote Jewish cultural interest and creative achievement in America.

AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

STATEMENT BY
ELMER L. WINTER, President, American Jewish Committee

Former Prime Minister Golda Meir has denied that portion of an article by Lev Navrozov published in the August 1974 issue of COMMENTARY which refers to her alleged furnishing of a list of Soviet Jewish volunteers to Stalin during her tenure as Israeli Minister to the Soviet Union in 1948-9.

The contents of COMMENTARY magazine are within the sole determination of its Editor, and the American Jewish Committee is certain that accepted standards of journalistic responsibility were adhered to. Nevertheless, the American Jewish Committee, having great regard for Mrs. Meir, believes her denial and regrets deeply any distress which the article may have caused her.

Letters from Readers

Nuclear Weapons for Israel?

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Central to Robert W. Tucker's analysis in "Israel and the United States: From Dependence to Nuclear Weapons?" [November 1975] is the problem of Israeli security: how can Israel maintain and indeed even increase its margin of security? There is no doubt that in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict any analysis of Israeli foreign policy must be based primarily on security issues. Mr. Tucker takes it for granted in his criticism of the step-by-step approach—as many Israelis do—that the territories conquered in 1967 constitute the central factor in the maintenance of Israeli security; indeed, that by giving up territories in the last Israeli-Egyptian agreement, Israel has given up terribly important, tangible security assets for which, he maintains, President Sadat has not reciprocated in any way.

This view of the territories as a central factor of Israeli security is in itself very debatable. As the October 1973 war demonstrated, territories by themselves do not provide security against surprise attacks. In fact they increase the likelihood of surprise. Take the Sinai: until the 1967 war, this peninsula was partially demilitarized. Thus a major Egyptian military move into the Sinai, as in 1967, served as a warning signal to Israel. But when Israeli forces were positioned in a forward deployment along or close to the Suez Canal, opposite the major concentration of Egyptian forces, as in 1973, a successful Egyptian surprise attack occurred. Furthermore, one of the most crucial elements in the Israeli military posture until 1967 was a reliance on short internal supply and communication lines. These internal lines enabled Israel to transfer troops quickly from one front to another and to change at will the focus and emphasis of the battle. But once the territories had been acquired, the advantages of internal lines were lost, and this certainly had a negative impact during the 1973 war. There are several other reasons why in purely military terms holding on to the territories is, in fact, a source of weakness for Israel rather than of strength. It would be to Israel's advantage to withdraw from the territories and demilitarize them. (Only on the Golan Heights the balance of advantage may be somewhat different.)

What really constitutes the basis of Israel's security is the positive ratio between the actual military capabilities of Israel and the Arab states. The territories are important primarily as political bargaining chips and not as strategic military outposts. In the last analysis Israel's superior military capability is its only defense against future Arab attacks. But this . . . depends on several economic and political considerations. To begin with, the question is not what the absolute military capabilities of Israel are, but rather how they compare with Arab capabilities. Arab capabilities are flexible; they have changed from a relatively low level, as was the case until 1967, to a much higher level, and some Arabs today are actively seeking to achieve an even higher level.

The Arabs' relatively lower mobilization against Israel before 1967 was due to several interacting factors: first, contrary to what the Arabs themselves and the Israelis claimed, the fight against Israel, although very important on the level of ideological commitment, had to compete with other Arab priorities, primarily the inter-Arab competition for hegemony in the area. Until 1967 only a part of the actual Arab potential was mobilized for military purposes and no meaningful Arab unity for a fight against Israel . . . was created. But after 1967 the situation began to change because of the continued Israeli presence in the conquered territories. At that time, in addition to the ideological conflict between the Arabs and Israel, a crucial element was added: for the first time, Egyptian and Syrian territories (not just Palestinian ones) were lost, thus . . . fostering a unity of purpose. . . . Thus too the Arabs' grievance over the territories . . . led to many more efforts . . . to mobilize against Israel, even though these efforts ultimately failed because of the continued mobilization and higher quality of Israeli forces. However, one must remember that in the long run, Israeli resources are more limited than Arab ones. So if the pres-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ent arms race keeps accelerating, and if the Arab unity of purpose and action against Israel increases, there is a possibility that the ratio between the military capabilities of Israel and the Arab world could—after ten or fifteen years—change against Israel. Not that this is an inevitable outcome, or that the change—if it happens—would be critical and completely upset the balance. There could be a limited change which would still be threatening. Thus the objective of any prudent Israeli security policy which considers the ratio of military capabilities crucial (as indeed it is) must consider the continuation of Arab unity and readiness for mobilization against Israel as the major danger. The Israeli objective should be to make the conflict less salient and less acute. But the continued Israeli presence in the territories makes the conflict *more* acute and serves as a focus for Arab unity.

Moreover, the ratio of military capabilities between the two sides also depends on what Israel can obtain from the outside, including both financial support and the weapons systems themselves. This is the reason for Israel's dependence on the United States—a dependence which seems to be inescapable because without it the ratio would change against Israel. Such Israeli dependence would lessen only if the Arab side were to lower its rate of mobilization against Israel. Whether this would ever occur is hard to ascertain, but one can assume that only a gradual diffusion of the conflict could achieve this effect. Diffusion would include, among other things, the return of the territories, Egyptian, Jordanian, and Syrian, which Israel has held since 1967.

The last interim agreement, which comes under Mr. Tucker's severe scrutiny, is a step in the direction of diffusion. Mr. Tucker suggests that Egypt has given up nothing within the context of the agreement whereas Israel has given up important strategic assets. As stated before, the Sinai is not an important security asset for Israel. . . . However, one must add that even within the context of this interim agreement, contrary to what Mr. Tucker maintains, President Sadat has indeed made several important pledges. They are, admittedly, intangible, but the political process relies on intangibles as well as tangibles. Egypt made a major symbolic step by declaring very clearly that the only way to solve the Arab-Israeli problem is not by force but by peaceful means. Furthermore, it has renounced the use of force and has described this interim agreement as a significant step toward final peace. Even more important than these pledges, however, is the fact that the interim agreement indeed affects the "rules of the game" in the Middle East in the sense that the unity of purpose and action in the Arab world, referred to earlier, has weakened. Indeed, the Arab extremists who criticize the interim agreement very vehemently are referring precisely to this change in the "rules of the game" as a blow to the mobilization of Arab resources for the "battle against Israel." For once they are right in their analysis.

All this does not mean that the Arabs will not go on mobilizing their resources; it does not mean that peace is already around the corner; it does not mean that there will not be any reversals of Egyptian policy, and indeed one might even envisage the possibility of another war between Israel and Egypt. It does mean, however, that new alternative avenues have been opened, that the process of unifying the Arab world for a continued war against Israel has been somewhat halted, and that Israel's military superiority in the Middle East continues. . . .

Mr. Tucker is worried about growing Israeli dependence on the United States. His solution is that Israel should go nuclear, thus enhancing its security while at the same time diminishing its dependence on the United States. Both these propositions are open to question. As suggested before, Israeli dependence on the United States does not stem from any American military guarantee to Israel—which in fact has never been given—but from the necessary Israeli dependence on financial support and on the supply of more and more modern, *conventional* weapons systems for the Israeli forces. It is highly unlikely that the introduction of nuclear weapons by itself would change this situation. Nuclear weapons cannot fulfill the role of conventional arms. It is unimaginable that the Israeli army would ever be ready to forgo or even slightly weaken its conventional military capability and depend entirely on nuclear arms. Indeed, the lessons of the superpower

I love my side of Barbados because there isn't anything I want to do that I can't do there.
I can walk on a wide white beach and swim in the warm blue Caribbean.
I can dance until the moon turns into the sun.
I can buy great things for beautiful prices.
And, best of all, my side of Barbados is right next to his.

BARBADOS
Just 21 miles long and a smile wide.
See your travel agent or call or write:
The Barbados Tourist Board
800 Second Ave., N.Y., N.Y. 10017 (212) 986-6516

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Silver Spray Club

FLAG POINT

RUNAWAY BAY JAMAICA

Strictly a CLUB operation-No pets and minimum age limit is 14. We have superlative kitchen, excellent bar and wine list, while our staff is capable, courteous and friendly. Our rates are M-A-P, and twice weekly we have delightful local entertainment, as well as frequent outdoor barbecues and Sunday Brunches. Fielding and Fodor have given us top rating for the last 5 years.

We are in the happy position of being able to offer a wide range of amenities:

Golf (green fees and carts extra)
Tennis (nominal court charge)
Swimming
Snorkelling
Deepsea fishing
Sailing (Sunfish, Catamaran, & day-sailing or cruising aboard our own manned 40-foot ketch, "ANYTIME III," at a daily rate per person
Horseback riding
Rapids-rafting
Trap Shooting
Shuffleboard
Lawn Bowling
Sight-seeing & speelunking through the mountains and rain forests
Rest and relaxation for those who prefer it.

Car Rentals Available

Banking Facilities and Shopping Areas Nearby

Average Yearly Temperature 72-82°

For Reservations Write:

Cmdr. Jordan L. ("Larry") Mott, Prop.
S.P.S. '21–Yale '25
Silver Spray Club
Runaway Bay, Jamaica

Cable Address:

Silspray
Runaway baja

relationship show that after a period of emphasizing nuclear arms, a balance is restored in which conventional arms are again reemphasized. This would probably be even more likely to occur in the Israeli-Arab context.

The possibilities of different kinds of limited military campaigns with conventional arms even if nuclear arms were to be introduced into the Middle East are many. To cite just one example: assume that Israel and Egypt acquire nuclear weapons and Israel continues to occupy the Sinai, and that Egypt then starts a war using all its conventional capabilities but with one limited objective: to regain a small part of the Sinai (quite similar to what happened in 1973). In such a case it is highly unlikely that Israel would threaten to use nuclear weapons merely to prevent the Egyptian armies from conquering twenty miles of the Sinai desert. Such an Israeli nuclear threat would not be credible. Egypt might counter such a threat by threatening to use its nuclear capability against Israel. No rational leadership would be ready to sacrifice Israel to defend a narrow zone of twenty or thirty miles in the Sinai desert. The campaign would have to be won with conventional arms. The Israeli defense establishment will always have to exhaust the possibilities of conventional campaigns before considering nuclear arms. The latter could be counted on only in a last-ditch effort. . . .

According to Mr. Tucker, in addition to continued build-up of conventional arms, Israel will have to develop its nuclear capability, and that is not to be done cheaply. One generation of systems may have to follow another one, and before long one might witness the two sides deploying Polaris-type submarines and other very sophisticated delivery systems. Needless to say, all of these are terribly expensive. And Israel might end up not with diminishing dependence on the United States but in fact with increased dependence in terms not only of financial and conventional support but also of nuclear technological support.

Mr. Tucker points out that because of the conflicting American interests in the Middle East (on the one hand backing for Israel while on the other growing dependence on Arab oil) the contradictions in American-Israeli relations would increase over time and the complications resulting from growing Israeli dependence on the United States coupled with American commitments to the Arab side would strain Israeli-American relations to the breaking point. But if Israel went nuclear, something which previous, current, and in all likelihood future U.S. administrations would consider threatening to American interests, the strain on Israeli-American relations would be greatly increased, and under such conditions the threshold for a break in Israeli-American relations would be considerably lower.

It is questionable, too, whether nuclear weapons would enhance Israel's security. Mr. Tucker realizes of course that if Israel went nuclear, Egypt would also acquire nuclear weapons. Furthermore, he also points out that without second-strike capabilities in the hands of both sides the dangers of nuclear escalation are considerable. He seems to assume, however, that such a capability would easily be gained. To enumerate here the difficulties involved in obtaining second-strike capability would require too much space and complex technical treatment. Suffice it to say that the development of invulnerable nuclear capabilities is a difficult process and involves many uncertainties. Moreover, the development of such a capability takes a long time; in the transition period the two sides will have grave fears about first strikes launched by the other side.

Mr. Tucker cites the model of superpower relations as one of the ways to assess future nuclear relations in the Middle East, but here one must recognize the different elements in the Middle Eastern conflict which cast doubt on his analogy. . . .

There are additional reasons, among them the level of rationality of some of the leaders in the Arab world and the highly irresponsible behavior of some of the other leaders, that suggest that nuclear weapons in the Middle East, far from necessarily stabilizing relations in that troubled and tormented region, might in fact lead to the first full-scale nuclear war in the world.

All this does not suggest that nuclear weapons will not eventually be introduced into the Middle East, resulting in a very unstable balance of nuclear deterrence. It does suggest, however, that a major effort should be invested in reaching a political settlement, probably

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Wouldn't you like to see your husband reach for a second cup?

Then change to rich Yuban® -for richness worth a second cup.

I did. It used to bother me when my husband kept turning down a second cup. Because I'm too good a wife not to care about good coffee. So I changed to Yuban. It's extra rich taste comes from extra rich beans—like sun ripened beans from Colombia, some of the world's richest coffee beans. That's Yuban—for richness worth a second cup.

Yuban®
The Simcha Coffee

CERTIFIED KOSHER

The premium coffee of General Foods

GF
GENERAL FOODS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

through a high level of superpower involvement. Moreover, the eventual settlement should include restrictions on the supply of arms to the Middle East and should establish an effective anti-nuclear proliferation regime there. Furthermore, if nuclear weapons were eventually to find their way into the Middle East, the level of current hostility should be reduced through some political settlement. Continued Israeli control over the territories constitutes such a severe grievance to the Arab countries that one can envisage limited campaigns aimed at regaining sovereignty over these areas even after nuclear weapons have been introduced into the Middle East. In any case, a political settlement coupled with an Israeli withdrawal from the territories would most probably change the acuteness of the basic dilemma that Mr. Tucker is worried about: the interaction between the future of Israeli security and Israeli dependence on the United States. It would introduce a higher level of stability into the area and it might also halt somewhat the pace of the arms race and hence Israeli dependence on the United States.

If the settlement does not take place, and the arms race continues, then Israel will have no choice but to continue its growing dependence on the United States in order to maintain the favorable ratio of conventional capabilities with the Arab world. The only two contingencies under which Israel would have no alternative but to go nuclear are: first, if the ratio between the conventional forces of the two sides were to change in a dramatic way against Israel, or secondly, if the Arab world itself acquired nuclear capabilities.

YAIR EVRON
Program for Science and
International Affairs
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Having benefited considerably from Robert W. Tucker's scholarly writings in the past, I am the more appalled by his article. . . .

The argument is remarkable for its bold, unsupported assertions. Mr. Tucker contends, for example, that an Israeli nuclear deterrent, by threatening Arab governments harboring guerrilla movements with nuclear destruction, would compel these governments to control or expel the movements, thus inhibiting guerrilla activity. This presupposes a great deal. It assumes that Israel could reasonably and credibly threaten states like Lebanon and Syria with nuclear attack if they do not control the actions of the PLO and other splinter terrorist groups. Is this really possible? The historical record is not encouraging. Austria's attempts to make Piedmont or Serbia responsible for the actions of Italian or Bosnian terrorists were not productive, and were widely condemned. The same is true of the U.S. and North Vietnam. Could Great Britain today threaten the Irish Republic with nuclear attack on account of the IRA?

It further assumes that the governments of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and other states possess the internal strength and stability to enable them to control or expel the terrorists if they wish to, and that a nuclear threat would force them to use that power. But all the evidence goes against this assumption —witness Lebanon at this moment.

Finally, it assumes that a nuclear threat would improve on the present Israeli deterrent against terrorist raids, namely large-scale reprisals. Yet Mr. Tucker simultaneously assumes that Arab countries will quickly follow Israel in going nuclear; indeed, he bases his hope for peace and stability on a balance of terror in the Middle East. It is not at all clear, however, why Israel's nuclear threat should inhibit small, fanatical, and largely uncontrolled groups from terrorist attacks on Israel when the Israeli nuclear response would be directed not at the terrorists themselves but at the host countries, while Israel is supposed *not* to be deterred from its reprisal raids by Arab nuclear missiles aimed at Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. Indeed, there is something very strange about the way Mr. Tucker believes that a mutual nuclear threat will somehow *force* Arab governments to be rational, but only *permit* Israel to be more moderate if it wishes to.

Plainly Mr. Tucker cannot have it both ways. Either a mutual nuclear threat will deter the governments on both sides equally—in which case Israel reaps a decided disadvantage because its enemies include groups less under the control of regular governments and therefore freer to operate under a nuclear stalemate; or the nuclear threat will not finally deter either side's governments, in which case the scenario is set for escalation from guerrilla raids not to the limit of conventional war but to nuclear holocaust.

Mr. Tucker further contends that a balance of terror between Israel and the Arab states need be no more unstable than that between the USSR and China today. First of all, if Adam Ulam and other experts are to be believed, the Russo-Chinese balance of terror (if stable now) was dangerously unstable at various points while China was acquiring a nuclear capability. Russia considered drastic moves to forestall this, including a preventive strike; the Berlin and Cuban missile crises were connected with Soviet fears of a nuclear China. Can one be so sure that Israel, if it becomes nuclear first, will stand patiently by while the Arab states catch up?

Besides, the whole parallel is grossly misleading. The Russo-Chinese antagonism, however intense, is mainly a rivalry over ideological leadership and great-power influence. For Israel, Syria, and the Palestinians their central purposes and very existence are at stake. China's territorial claims simply do not compare in importance and immediacy with the issues of Sinai, the Gaza strip, the Golan Heights, and old Jerusalem for Israel and the Arab states—to say nothing of Palestinian claims on all of Israel.

Mr. Tucker thinks a nuclear deterrent, giving Israel a sense of security, would enable it to be less intransigent on the question of occupied territories and frontiers. This assumes that nuclear weapons make territorial extent unimportant in warfare, which is quite untrue. Even if nuclear weapons did give Israel a sense of security—a dubious proposition—and even if Israel wanted the occupied territories only for security, and not also to realize historic dreams, a nuclear balance of terror, far from inducing Israel to give up the occupied lands, would only lead it to hold on to them and consolidate them, partly because Israel would now have the ultimate weapon to deter the Arabs from reconquering them, and partly because Israel would need desperately to disperse its targets and its nuclear missiles over as much territory as possible, knowing that its enemies would always have much greater room for dispersal.

Mr. Tucker admits that "a Qaddafi may be willing to take foolish risks" in a nuclear environ-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sixty reasons why you need Book Digest magazine.

Can you talk intelligently about ten of the books pictured on this page?

If you wish you could keep up with all the reading you'd like to do, BOOK DIGEST is the answer.

With sixty books in eight issues.

Every issue of BOOK DIGEST contains selections and carefully edited excerpts from 7 to 8 books.

Many are best sellers. Others are of prime importance.

All material is in the author's own words and style. Nothing is added or rewritten. And we clear it beforehand with the publisher and/or author.

Slip an issue of BOOK DIGEST in your pocket. It's like taking along several books at a time. Books such as:

¶ **Sylvia Porter's Money Book**
¶ **Conversations with Kennedy** *by Benjamin Bradlee*
¶ **Total Fitness** *by Morehouse and Gross*
¶ **Humboldt's Gift** *by Saul Bellow*
¶ **The Ascent of Man** *by J. Bronowski*
¶ **The Pleasure Bond** *by Masters and Johnson*
¶ **The Great Railway Bazaar** *by Paul Theroux*
¶ **"Mo": A Woman's View of Watergate**
by Maureen Dean with Hays Gorey
¶ **WW II: A Chronicle of Soldiering** *by James Jones*

Sixty books in eight issues for just $6. Or 10¢ a book.

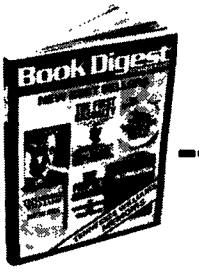
ORDER YOUR COMPLIMENTARY COPY NOW.

To introduce you to BOOK DIGEST, we have a no-risk, no-obligation trial offer. Let us send you the current issue of BOOK DIGEST. If you aren't pleased with it, write "cancel" across your bill, and you can keep this issue as a complimentary copy. If you do decide to become a subscriber you will receive a total of 8 issues for $6—a substantial saving.

It comes to less than 10¢ a book.

Return the card or call toll-free, 24 hours a day:

800-228-9700



Book Digest magazine

P.O. Box 2451, Boulder, Colorado 80302

TRIAL SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

Please send me my trial complimentary copy of the current issue of Book Digest and enroll me as a subscriber at a cost of $6 for a total of 8 issues.

I understand that if I am not fully satisfied with the current issue, I may cancel without obligation within 14 days and keep my complimentary copy. [No need to send cash. We will be happy to bill you later.] 6231

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

In Canada $7.50. Other countries $9 (cash only).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ment, but argues that this makes no great difference because the major Arab states would act rationally. Even if this unsupported assumption were sound, who will guarantee that Qaddafi cannot use Libya's oil wealth to acquire nuclear weapons himself? Where would Mr. Tucker's stable balance of terror be then?

He is equally unworried about the effects of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East on Soviet-American détente and on world tensions. Even if (as he concedes is possible) Israel holds on to its conquests after going nuclear, without (in Mr. Tucker's view) any longer being able to justify their retention on the grounds of secure frontiers, he says, "Why should this threaten détente and increase the risk of superpower confrontation?" Why indeed? A situation in which Israel succeeded by nuclear threat, backed by the United States, in imposing its terms on all the countries of the Middle East would of course mean an unequivocal defeat for the Soviet Union's entire policy and strategy in this crucial area. It would deal an enormous blow to Soviet prestige, would give the Chinese an incomparable propaganda weapon, and would hurt Soviet influence in the whole Third World and its leadership in the Communist bloc. It might even cause domestic problems. But what are all these to Russia, compared to détente with the United States? We have seen in Portugal and Angola how eager the USSR is to avoid anything that might jeopardize it.

If Mr. Tucker's assertions are astounding, what he omits to consider is even more so. There is not one bit of argument here on exactly how and why nuclear weapons will be mutually deterring; how and why the balance of terror will become stable; how and why nuclear weapons will increase Israel's capability vis-à-vis its enemies; how Israel will get them and pay for them; how many it can and should have; where it would target them, and how it would in case of necessity use them, and with what effects; and, finally, how nuclear weapons would make Israel more independent of the United States. Let us see what even a brief and inadequate glance at these central questions does to Mr. Tucker's case.

On the matter of mutual deterrence, Mr. Tucker seems to believe that if two sides each have a second-strike nuclear capability this automatically works as a mutual deterrent, without regard to their relative size, resources, and inherent vulnerability. Is this true? I doubt it. Suppose that *(per impossibile)* Britain developed a second-strike nuclear capability vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, based on missile-bearing submarines. Would this capability alone deter the Soviet Union in a real crisis, in view of the enormously greater inherent vulnerability of Britain? Any such second-strike capability would be for Britain, in effect, a Doomsday weapon. After Britain had literally ceased to exist, it would still be able to do Russia unacceptable damage. This would be Israel's position vis-à-vis the Arab world in a nuclear balance of terror; would its deterrent really be credible?

But let this pass; assume for the sake of argument that if Israel could achieve a second-strike capability, it would deter its enemies. Then ask what is actually involved in the small state of Israel with its limited resources developing a second-strike nuclear capability against all its actual and potential enemies (a sizable list, which Israel's going nuclear would only serve to lengthen). Plainly Israel cannot acquire or afford an unlimited nuclear arsenal. This would mean that in order to have a credible deterrent, Israel would have to target its limited number of weapons not on enemy-weapons installations but on cities, to achieve the maximum kill ratio. Leave aside again the horrendous moral and propaganda implications of this, and consider the military and political ones. Except for Egypt, Israel's least implacable major foe, Israel itself is more vulnerable to an attack on its cities than its enemies are. But suppose that a strategy of destroying cities would be a credible deterrent against Syria, Iraq, and Jordan. Behind them lies the oil wealth, and eventually the nuclear weapons, of Saudi Arabia, Libya, and the Persian Gulf states. Here there are simply not many centers of population to destroy. A credible deterrent in these areas would have to be aimed at destroying the oil fields permanently or

PRIMO DEL REY
HAND MADE CIGARS
Perhaps surpass
even the finest pre-embargo Havanas.
For brochure illustrating full line, please write: Moro Cigar Company, Sales Office, Room 1701, 15 Columbus Circle, New York, New York 10023. (212) 333-3500.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for a very long time through atomic pollution. In other words, the Israeli nuclear gun, in order credibly to deter all its present enemies, has also to be pointed squarely at the heads of the whole Western world and all the other countries directly or indirectly dependent on Arab oil for survival. Is there not a point at which this proposal becomes quite simply mad? . . .

And what of the stable balance of terror that is supposed to emerge? Here Mr. Tucker seems to rely on the American-Soviet example. There are a few minor factors involved in the American-Soviet nuclear balance (one achieved only at considerable risk, incidentally, and by no means secured now for all time to come) which do not apply to the Arab-Israeli situation: the fact that the U.S. and the USSR have never fought each other; that they have been allies in a world war; that they are territorially remote from each other; that they have no territorial claims against each other; that they are superpowers with worldwide interests, competing but not fundamentally opposed; that they have stable domestic governments and ideological stability, and are able to control their own domestic opposition and pressure groups; that they are each mainly concerned with domestic issues and with leadership within their respective blocs, etc. But again, leave all this aside: surely one vital element in American-Soviet nuclear stability is the simple fact that there is only one finger on the respective nuclear triggers, and that both superpowers have vigorously resisted and checked nuclear proliferation, if not entirely stopped it. Can Mr. Tucker possibly imagine, if Israel goes nuclear and the Arabs follow, that these rival, unstable, faction-ridden Arab states could conceivably develop a single, unified, responsible control over their atomic arsenals? And what of Turkey, Iran, Greece, and other countries in the general area? Again, does it not become insane to talk of a stable nuclear balance of terror when the only likely scenario is an Israeli nuclear arsenal, followed by five or six independent Arab nuclear arsenals, followed by God knows how much nuclear proliferation in the Eastern Mediterranean and adjacent areas? . . .

Mr. Tucker believes that nuclear weapons can make Israel more independent of the United States and less of a dangerous burden to it. I am inclined to agree that they might indeed—but not in a way that he or I or any other sane person could contemplate without horror. The adoption by Israel of a nuclear strategy, with all its attendant likely consequences, might be enough to persuade the American government and people that they must leave Israel to its fate. Mr. Tucker's proposal is an exercise in thinking the hitherto (for many) unthinkable: the introduction of nuclear weapons into the most volatile area in the world in order to give Israel the peace with security and independence which has so far escaped it despite its tremendous exertions. I can well understand why such thinking is possible for the Israelis themselves and for those who make Israel's right to existence their highest priority. But it is a grave mistake to believe that the United States can in the long run be persuaded or pressured into adopting fully this scale of priorities. However valuable Israel is to America, it is in the final analysis a foreign country. . . .

I think the U.S. must and will abandon Israel if it adopts a nuclear strategy, but not because such a strategy would be morally wrong. I think it would be, but do not expect this view to be persuasive to the Israelis or their supporters, and do not press it. It is rather that Israel would be trying to do the impossible, and one cannot finally help someone who insists on trying this. If he cannot be dissuaded, he must be left alone. When I try to understand how an able and intelligent analyst like Mr. Tucker (or Walter Laqueur, who helped him with the article) can propose a course so illogical and full of perils, I can only explain it as a case of choosing the impossible because all the possible courses seem intolerable. . . . There is an old story of the wizard condemned to death by a king, who gained a reprieve by promising that within two years he would teach the king's horse how to fly. He reasoned, "Within two years the king may die, or I may die, or the horse may die. And if none of these happens, who knows? Maybe I can teach the horse to fly!" Two-thirds of Mr. Tucker's

The most civilized hotel in New York. Maybe the world.

The Regency Hotel

Park Avenue at 61st Street, New York, N.Y. 10021. (212) 759-4100

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

article is a sober, convincing argument that none of Israel's present choices is much good—that neither step-by-step diplomacy, nor concessions by Israel on the occupied territories, nor an American guarantee of Israel has much chance of giving it peace, security, and independence. In other words, the king will not die, the wizard will not die, the horse will not die. Therefore, asserts Mr. Tucker, nuclear weapons *will* give Israel peace, security, and independence—it *can* teach the horse how to fly.

What makes this so desperately sad as well as dangerous is that we have just been through all this, and proved at great cost the folly of such thinking and action. The fundamental premise of American policy in Vietnam was that we could gradually raise the level of threat and punishment to the point where our opponents would make a rational decision to abandon their policy. There are still some, of course, who believe that this course could have worked if only we had gone further, bombed Hanoi back into the Stone Age. But most of us (including Mr. Tucker, I would suppose) have seen that this strategy did not work because it was essentially unworkable, and that our nuclear weapons in particular were not credible as a threat and, given their overall consequences, simply not usable as punishment. Now, under conditions infinitely more unfavorable and perilous, Mr. Tucker proposes that Israel continue to pursue the same impossible strategy to its ultimate conclusion. What Israeli victories in war and massive reprisal raids have not done, an Israeli nuclear threat is supposed to do—force the Arabs to be "rational," i.e., to give up their basic aims and to accept peace essentially on Israeli terms. The horse will not fly. If Israel tries it anyway, and attempts to pull the United States along with it, it will discover that this horse also will not fly.

PAUL W. SCHROEDER
Department of History
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Urbana, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his essay, Robert W. Tucker begins by noting, rightly, the increasing divergence between American and Israeli policies, and the dangers for Israel of excessive dependence on the U.S. His solution is a nuclear deterrent for Israel. The possession of nuclear weapons is supposed to insure the survival and increase the independence of Israel, to deter the Arabs from major attacks, either to oblige the Arabs to resign themselves to Israel's existence or to allow Israel to make territorial concessions without security fears, and thus to serve both American and Israeli interests. Not since General Gallois has anyone placed so many hopes on so hellish a *deus ex machina*. Unfortunately they rest on very shaky assumptions.

Mr. Tucker assumes a stable deterrent: invulnerable second-strike forces. This means indestructible land-based missiles and nuclear submarines. Can one seriously assume that Israel and the Arab states could build such weapons themselves? What foreign power would provide them with such equipment, in violation of the non-proliferation treaty? Should their nuclear forces consist in airplanes and vulnerable missiles, each side would have an incentive to strike first: the Arabs in order to destroy at one fell swoop (with or without nuclear weapons) Israel's cities, airfields, and bases, Israel—whose nightmare is the fear of such an attack—in order to disarm the enemy preemptively. Some stability!

Mr. Tucker assumes that nuclear weapons will have the same moderating effect in the Middle East as in the Soviet-American and Soviet-Chinese confrontations. It would take too long to analyze here all the differences in the strategic and political situations. Let me say only that the intensity of the territorial conflict in the Middle East is far greater than, say, between Moscow and Peking, and that the small size of Israel might expose the Arabs to the temptation of trying, in the absence of a settlement, to destroy their enemy before his deterrent becomes invulnerable. At a minimum, they would attempt to hurt and hound Israel, on the ground, in world agencies, through global terrorism, in ways that would make an Israeli nuclear first strike extremely risky, in political and in military terms, for Israel.

Should a nuclear war threaten or erupt in the Middle East, the U.S. would have either to intervene, thus risking a confrontation with Moscow at a far higher level of danger than in the past, or else to dissociate itself from Israel. The first choice is hardly in America's interest, and the second is not in Israel's.

Mr. Tucker assumes that Israel would remain sufficiently dependent on the U.S. to be prodded into concessions to its enemies. How could Washington force a nuclear Israel to do what it has never been able (or willing) to oblige an utterly dependent non-nuclear Israel to do?

Neither in the Arab-Israeli conflict nor in the Persian Gulf are weapons and military expeditions a miracle cure. There is no substitute for complex and long-range diplomacy. For such a diplomatic strategy, force and the threat of force can at times play an essential role. But when the parties display incandescent national passions and grievances, and when the great powers show a dangerous mix of multiple involvements and murky commitments, the "mad momentum" of a local nuclear arms race, far from injecting reasonableness into all sides, might turn a bad situation into a universal disaster.

STANLEY HOFFMANN
Institut d'Etudes Politiques
Paris, France

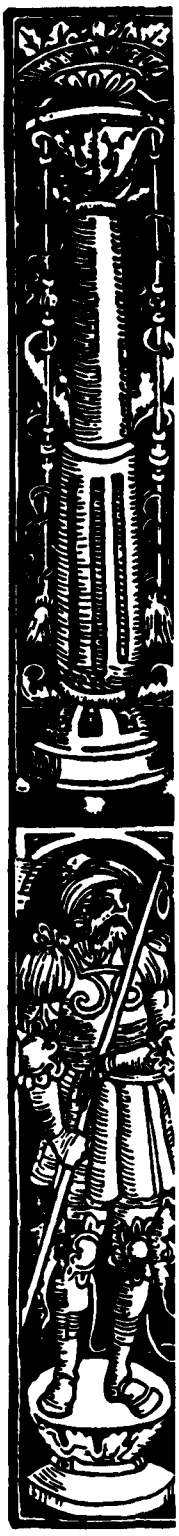
TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Robert W. Tucker is apparently a member of the same school of foreign-policy analysis as Herman Kahn. Both have taken upon themselves the duty of thinking the unthinkable, presumably because most men of good will avoid doing so.

By a process of logical thought Messrs. Kahn and Tucker play scenarios and game theory in which every possible argument is turned to account to bolster whatever hypothesis they happen to be expounding currently. . . . If American State Department officials and their counterparts in the Israeli government followed Mr. Tucker's lead and were to take seriously his arguments for a nuclear-deterrent capability for Israel, then the unthinkable could become a reality. Such drift toward world nuclear disaster cannot be allowed. Instead of engaging in games of logic, foreign-policy experts should bring all their thought and energy to bear upon the problems of nuclear disarmament.

Even if one were to agree that a balance of terror is a force for peace, it would still be necessary to ask Mr. Tucker why such a balance between Israel and the Arab coun-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



An attractive, inexpensive family edition of—

THE PASSOVER HAGGADAH

With English translation, introduction, explanations, and commentaries, based on the Haggadah studies of E. D. Goldschmidt. Edited by Nahum Glatzer.

Illustrated with woodcuts from the famous Prague Haggadah of 1526 • 126 pages • available as a sturdy softcover edition • stain and grease resistant

Now everyone can be on the same page of the Haggadah at the same time! Unique among the many editions of the Haggadah that are available, this volume—edited by the distinguished scholar Nahum Glatzer—is a veritable encyclopedia in miniature, a source-book of fascinating lore pertaining to every aspect—from the simplest to the most abstruse—of the ancient festival of Passover. Commentaries and essays by such distinguished scholars and thinkers as Solomon Zeitlin, Martin Buber, Franz Rosenzweig, buttress a text thoroughly annotated to provide guidance and illumination from the first Kiddush through the final singing of Had Gadya. With the help of this Haggadah—beautifully clear, legible, and compact—even a relative newcomer to the patriarchal role can guide his family through the wonderful intricacies of the Passover ritual—whether he chooses to preside over an elaborate traditional Seder, or a simpler, more improvised contemporary celebration.

Softcover Haggadahs	Prices
10 or more copies	$1.95 each
1 to 9 copies	$2.25 each

PASSOVER—APRIL 14, 1976

THE JEWISH BOOK CLUB *165 East 56th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022*

Please send me: ___Soft cover Haggadahs @ $_____ each. Total $_____

☐ Payment enclosed. (The Jewish Book Club pays all packing and shipping charges.)

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

CITY_____ STATE_____ ZIP_____

LICENSED TO UNI.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tries is needed. A nuclear-capability balance already exists between the United States and the Soviet Union. Since they are the two leading opposing powers upon which world peace depends, it would seem that a balance of power between them is all that is necessary.

Peaceful solutions to international problems can be made possible by the passage of time. We did not go to war with Russia over the existence of a Communist Cuba close to our shores. Now trade relations appear imminent with the Cuban government. All efforts of international-relations experts must be directed toward the avoidance of war and to the purchase of time to allow political and economic relations between opposing nations to work themselves out through a process of evolution.

SIDNEY SIEGEL
North Hollywood, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It is indeed depressing that a nuclear strategy may well be Israel's best response to both Arab attack and dependence on the U.S. Robert W. Tucker's thesis stems largely from the conception that the U.S. has little self-interest in defending Israel and that its support is based on moral and symbolic grounds.

Russia has an interest in perpetuating the Arab-Israeli wars because the Arabs are then forced to rely on Russian arms. U.S. interest in the continuation of the conflict lies in the fact that it prevents a confrontation between the conservative and radical Arab states. As long as the Arab states are united against Israel, they will not engage in an ideologically-based struggle that could endanger the oil supplies of the West.

In short, internationalization of this conflict works to feed it rather than contain it.

ADAM WIENER
Jamaica, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Robert W. Tucker's article is both brilliant and very timely. Mr. Tucker's thesis about nuclear weapons develops out of an exhaustive analysis which shows that the deepening dependence of Israel on the U.S. has indeed made Israel a client state. . . .

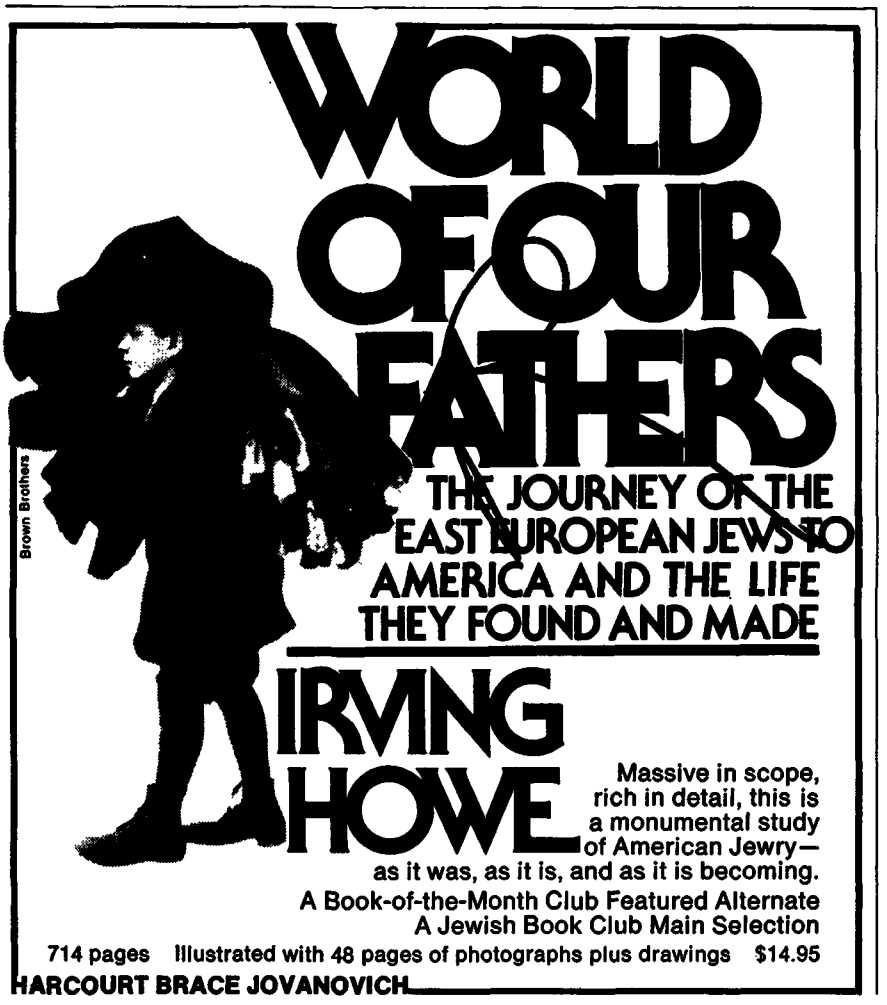
When Mr. Tucker comes to his main argument: that Israel should rely on a nuclear deterrent, he presents all possible objections to his case. This makes it imperative for his opponents to meet him on his own grounds, which I have yet to see done.

LEON KOGAN
Sacramento, California

ROBERT W. TUCKER writes:

Only one of the letters (Yair Evron's) takes exception to the more general analysis I made in the November COMMENTARY article. Mr. Evron argues that I have misunderstood the problem of Israeli security by exaggerating the importance of the territories taken by Israel in 1967 while neglecting the importance of the conventional arms balance. I do not deny the central importance of the latter, nor did I do so in the article. What I did point out is that the maintenance of a conventional balance in the coming years will prove increasingly difficult for Israel and will necessitate an almost complete dependence on the United States. Mr. Evron does not contest this. Instead, he argues that Israel's growing dependence is inevitable barring a political settlement with the Arabs, a settlement that would involve Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories.

Again, I did not say—or imply—that the territories "constitute the central factor in the maintenance of Israeli security." I did clearly imply that they form a significant element in Israeli security *at the present time*. Mr. Evron disagrees. He believes that the territories are very nearly the central factor in the maintenance of Israeli insecurity, that they form both a strategic and political liability for Israel. They are a strategic liability because, among other reasons, they extend Israeli lines of supply and communication. "Take the Sinai as an example," he tells us. But the Sinai is not an "example." It is *sui generis*. Why does he not take the Golan Heights as an example, or the West Bank (or, indeed, the Gaza Strip)? Even if we were to grant his arguments with respect to the Sinai, they would not apply to the other territories. Moreover, in the one territory to which they do apply, they must be qualified by other considerations. The Sinai per-


WORLD OF OUR FATHERS
THE JOURNEY OF THE EAST EUROPEAN JEWS TO AMERICA AND THE LIFE THEY FOUND AND MADE
IRVING HOWE
Brown Brothers
Massive in scope, rich in detail, this is a monumental study of American Jewry—as it was, as it is, and as it is becoming.
A Book-of-the-Month Club Featured Alternate
A Jewish Book Club Main Selection
714 pages Illustrated with 48 pages of photographs plus drawings $14.95
HARCOURT BRACE JOVANOVICH

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mits room for error. Its possession gives Israel strategic options in countering a high intensity threat it would otherwise not enjoy. It is another matter to argue, as Mr. Evron does, that a demilitarized Sinai would be a preferable solution for Israel. But the price entailed by this solution is politically impossible for Egypt, as Sadat has been frank to acknowledge.

Mr. Evron's real argument respecting the territories—and, more broadly, Israel's security—does not rest on military but political considerations. In this respect, his position is difficult to follow. The territories, he states at one point, are important to Israel "primarily as political bargaining chips." Elsewhere, however, he argues that retention of the territories by Israel since 1967 has given the Arabs a unity they would not have otherwise possessed. The Israeli presence in the territories makes the conflict *more* acute and serves as a focus for Arab unity today. We are led to the conclusion that the security threat Israel presently faces is largely of her own making.

If this is so, why are the territories important as political bargaining chips? It makes no sense to hold them as bargaining chips if their possession continues to have the effects Mr. Evron assumes. True, the Arabs want these territories and will presumably pay a price one day to get them back. But if their relinquishment means getting rid of a strategic liability while depriving the Arab coalition of one of its most important sources of unity, then it is sheer inadvertence on Israel's part not to abandon them forthwith. One does not hold on to something as a bargaining chip if its relinquishment is the unconditional key to deliverance from danger.

If Mr. Evron will not draw this conclusion, it is because he does not seem to believe it himself, and this despite the intimations that he does believe it. What he does clearly believe—it is apparent throughout his letter—is that Israeli policy after 1967 was seriously in error. I agree with him on this, though I remain skeptical about the results a different policy might have achieved. But the important point here is not what might have been. One must start from where one is, not from where one might have been had one acted differently. Even if Mr. Evron's judgments on the mistakes of the past are well taken, they do not tell us much about what to do today. There is little to be served in comparing the pre-1967 period with the present period since circumstances have changed dramatically and probably irrevocably in the intervening years. The Arabs now see themselves, and with good reason, as on the ascendant. An Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, even in the context of Mr. Evron's "political settlement," would have a very different meaning today from what it might have had immediately after the 1967 war.

Mr. Evron will not face up to this conclusion. He will not directly acknowledge that in a broader and deeper sense the balance of forces has shifted against Israel, even though the conventional military balance has yet to change in a significant way. If he did acknowledge this, he would have to abandon the assumption of a political settlement that would improve Israel's security position. For a political settlement taken in isolation would very likely reflect this broader shift rather than the imme-

Buy a ticket to Tel Aviv and get Europe free.

Israel is a long way off.
So it makes sense to make a stop on your way to Tel Aviv.
And there's no better place to stop than the heart of Europe. Germany. You can rest, relax, shop, sight-see, even do a little business in Cologne, Munich, or Frankfurt. All for the price of a Lufthansa ticket to Tel Aviv.
All of our flights serve fine kosher foods. Just place your special order when you make reservations.
If you'd like further information on our Tel Aviv flights, call your travel agent or Lufthansa.

Lufthansa German Airlines

680 Fifth Avenue, 52 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10019
Telephone: (212) 357-8400

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

diate conventional military balance. It may still be argued that Israel's position could be improved either by a reliable American guarantee that does not entail utter dependence, or by the weakening and eventual breakup of the Arab coalition. Neither prospect appears to me at all promising, and Mr. Evron has said little to lead me to alter my view. His cryptic suggestion of a political settlement "through a high level of superpower involvement" seems to me even less promising than the already unpromising proposal of an American guarantee.

WE ARE therefore back to where we began. Is there an alternative to the present relationship between Israel and the United States, with all the dangers this relationship holds out for both parties—though particularly for Israel? Paul Schroeder apparently does not think so. Although he is "appalled" by my proposal that Israel pursue a strategy of nuclear deterrence, he explains my lapse of sanity in an otherwise "sober, convincing argument" as "a case of choosing the impossible because all the possible courses seem intolerable." Intolerable to whom, one must ask? Certainly not to the United States (or to the world), since Mr. Schroeder well knows that *some* course will of necessity be chosen, if only through inadvertence. At the close of his letter he warns that if Israel were to choose the nuclear course it would be abandoned to its fate by this country. Very well. Then why the talk about all possible courses being intolerable? Evidently, they are not all intolerable. Since a course will be chosen, it will be one intolerable to Israel—or, if this is too dramatic, one that requires the Israelis to live more insecurely and more dependently than in the past. Why not say so openly and at least clear the air?

Mr. Schroeder's reaction is typical of many today. Yes, the situation is unfortunate. The patient (Israel) is not doing well at all. One does not know whether the illness is terminal, but it is clearly very serious. But what can one do? There is no apparent treatment that will restore the patient to good health. Nurse the patient along gently, then, in the hope that something may turn up. Above all, prevent the patient from undertaking any drastic measures of self-remedy. For such measures would not only prove self-destructive but destructive to others as well. Warn the patient not to count on further medication if the course of self-remedy is chosen.

In proposing the self-remedy of nuclear deterrence I badly underestimated the strength of the nuclear taboo—in general and in particular with respect to the Middle East. I might have avoided a great deal of trouble by arguing that quite apart from one's judgment of its desirability, the Middle East conflict is moving slowly but surely to a point of no-return on nuclearization. A great many signs support this conclusion. Mr. Schroeder may be appalled by it, as may many others, but this is unlikely to alter matters. Instead, I chose openly to advocate a course of policy rather than to hide a policy preference under the cloak of historical inevitability. This advocacy can certainly be challenged. In doing so, however, it seems preferable—I choose a mild term—to leave moral considerations aside. If the Israelis wish to debate the moral issue, that is their affair. Americans are scarcely in a position to do so, and the same must be said of Europeans. Nor is it a satisfactory response to argue that since we would be affected by a nuclearization of the Middle East conflict we have a right to pass moral judgment on any actions which bring this situation to pass. We have a right to determine our interests in this situation, and that is all.

APART from this, many of the objections the letters make to the course I proposed were anticipated in the article. I did not deal with these objections in any detail, however, since that would have required another and even lengthier article. In response to the letters several points might be emphasized and elaborated, if only briefly. Moreover, on at least one critical issue my argument needs clarification, if not some change.

The primary reasons for advocating a strategy of nuclear deterrence for Israel were: to place limits to Israel's dependence on the United States while altering its security framework in such a manner as to facilitate withdrawal from the territories, a withdrawal that will presumably mean the creation of a Palestinian state. I argued that a nuclear deterrent would give the Israelis a degree of assurance sufficient to enable them to take a much more flexible position over the occupied territories and the problem of the Palestinians. At the same time, I argued that a nuclear environment would be one in which the Arab states could no longer seriously entertain the goal of Israel's destruction since this goal could only be obtained at an unbearable cost. A nuclear environment would require the Arabs to move toward *de facto* acceptance of Israel and coexistence. I assumed that although Israel would acquire a nuclear deterrent force first, the major Arab states would in time follow the Israeli lead. I also assumed that a stable system of mutual deterrence was quite possible, that both sides could develop relatively invulnerable second-strike forces, and that both sides could be expected to behave rationally.

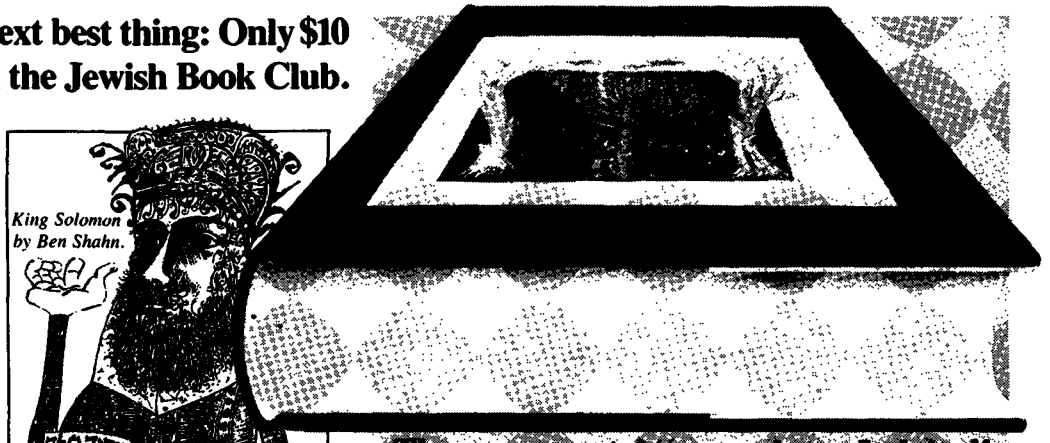
Before taking up the criticisms made of this proposal, two points should be noted. The first is that the strategy proposed for Israel is intended to avoid the seemingly intractable issue of what are the proper *quid pro quo*'s on the Arabs' part for Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and agreement to the creation of a Palestinian state. This issue appears intractable today not so much because of Israeli obduracy—as many believe—as because there is almost nothing the Arabs might plausibly promise now or in the immediate future that can form more than a marginal element of any reliable Israeli security framework. Given the nature of the conflict and the growing power of the Arabs, the Israelis cannot be expected to trade strategic assets, and to permit the rise of a state that will view Israel as mere irredenta, in exchange for promises which may readily be broken. It is unreasonable to demand that Israel mortgage its security to the good faith and pacific intentions of the Arabs. Yet without a substantial change in the structure of Israeli security, this is what Israel is asked to do today.

The second point is that a strategy of nuclear deterrence, by altering the basis of Israel's security, would not only permit but probably require Israel to relinquish the occupied territories and agree to the creation of a Palestinian state. In my article I was less than clear on this critical point. Although emphasizing what a strategy of nuclear deterrence would permit Israel to do, I did not emphasize what in all likelihood it would re-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

For people who really deserve the huge Encyclopaedia Judaica published in 16 volumes at $625.

Here's the next best thing: Only $10 with membership in the Jewish Book Club.



The editors of the 16-volume *Judaica* have completed the monumental task of distilling their knowledge of the Jewish heritage into one over-size volume of 720 pages, 15,000 entries, and three-quarters of a million words. For the family with young people of school or college age, this "one-volume Judaica" may well be the *best* thing. It can probably tell you (and your children) more about being Jewish than any other single volume in the English language.

- **Festivals and fasts of the Jewish year (page 189).**
- **Tables to help you make sense of the Jewish calendar (page 112).**
- **Is caviar kosher? See page 158.**
- **A handy chronology of the 300 most significant events in Jewish history (pp. 262-265).**

For those who want to brush up, for those who never really knew but always wanted to, for those who know but can't put it into words for their children, here is what it means to be a Jew. You can look up any aspect of the Jewish heritage that you have ever wondered about, worried about, or suddenly needed to know more about. *The words and music of Kol Nidre? See page 350.* This home library of Jewish knowledge will serve you for a lifetime:

Menorah by Benno Elkan.

1 As a guide to Jewish history, customs, traditions, culture, and folklore as handed down from generation to generation across the centuries.

2 As a biographical dictionary of the great Jewish personalities from Genesis to the present.

3 As a museum of Jewish art, spreading before your eyes in 2,000 illustrations the very image of the Jewish past.

4 As a remarkably clear exposition of Jewish ritual and belief.

The order of the Passover seder (page 472). Two ways to don phylacteries (diagram, page 589).

King Solomon by Ben Shahn.

FOR PEOPLE WHO NEED HELP WITH THEIR HEBREW (OR HAVE TO START FROM SCRATCH): How to read the Hebrew alphabet. *For your trip to Israel:* A basic Hebrew vocabulary of 1,000 words (page 651).

Some arguments you can settle and bets you can win:

- 65 Jewish winners of the Nobel Prize (page 455) and 223 Jews who have won Olympic medals (page 462).
- The Jewish star has sometimes been Christian (page 390).
- Judaism still has priests (page 489).

A general in the Chinese Army who is known to history as "Two Gun Cohen" (page 127). *People you may not think of as Jewish:* Houdini (page 272). Lorne Greene (page 226). Erich von Stroheim (page 575). Victor Borge (page 99).

For people who could use a little help in explaining the difference between the Talmud, Midrash, Mishnah, and Gemara: All the books of the "people of the Book" and what they contain.

THE ART OF BEING JEWISH IN PLACES WHERE MOST PEOPLE AREN'T. A gallery of Jewish art, architecture, and craftsmanship through the ages (much in full color).

Jewish gold glass from Rome. 3rd-4th century.

The monumental "one-volume Judaica"

• Compiled and printed in Israel by the publisher of *Encyclopaedia Judaica* • Edited by Geoffrey Wigoder, Editor-in-Chief of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* • Complete in one volume of 720 pages, 11¼" high, 8¾" wide. Weight 5½ lbs. • Illustrated with 2,000 treasures of the Jewish past from the great museums, libraries, galleries, archaeological sites, and private collections. • Published at $29.95.

SOME BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE JEWISH BOOK CLUB

1. Savings up to 50%: On Jewish-interest reference, fiction, history, biography, archaeology, cooking, travel, religion, art, children's books, records, limited-edition etchings, deluxe gift editions.
2. Quality editions: All books are identical to the publishers' editions in content, format, size, and quality.
3. Free Magazine: The *Jewish Book News* provides lively reviews of books, art, and recordings of Jewish interest.
4. A complete cultural service for the Jewish family: You'll be able to keep abreast of the best and most important books of Jewish interest — many not available to the general public or stocked by local stores.
5. Your minimum obligation: As few as four selections the first year.
6. A convenience and time-saver: Home shopping & home delivery.

HOW THE JEWISH BOOK CLUB WORKS:

After your membership is accepted, you will begin receiving the *Jewish Book News*, a free publication sent to you thirteen times a year (about every four weeks). All selections and alternates will be described in advance in the magazine.

If you want the main selection featured in the magazine, do nothing and it will be sent to you automatically. If you want an alternate or no book at all, simply indicate your choice on the order form always enclosed with the *News* and return it to us so that we receive it by the date specified. This date is designed to allow you at least 10 days to decide whether you want the selection.

Membership guarantee: If your *News* is delayed in the mail and therefore you receive the main selection without having had ten days to notify us, you may return that selection at our expense.

THE JEWISH BOOK CLUB 165 East 56th Street New York, N.Y. 10022

☐ Please send me ENCYCLOPEDIC DICTIONARY OF JUDAICA (regularly $29.95) at the special new member price of $10.00 and enroll me in the Jewish Book Club. I agree to accept as few as 4 selections or alternates during the next 12 months at the special member's prices plus a small charge for postage and handling. All selections and alternates will be described for me in advance in *The Jewish Book News* and I may decline any of them by returning the printed card provided.

☐ Check for $10.00 enclosed.

☐ Bill me.

☐ I am not a member of the Jewish Book Club, but would like to have the ENCYCLOPEDIC DICTIONARY OF JUDAICA at the special price of $10.00. Therefore, I agree to purchase an additional 4 selections or alternates during the next year.

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

SIGNATURE

A Service of the American Jewish Committee

LICENSED TO JWZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quire it to do. I did point to the danger that Israel might be tempted to use a nuclear deterrent to freeze the status quo. This would leave it unreconciled with its adversaries while possessed of a large and hostile Arab population in its midst. Moreover, it would seriously strain Israel's ties with America, ties that would already be seriously strained by having openly taken the nuclear route. Still, I left the impression that, however unwise, Israel might still be tempted and still be able to freeze the status quo, and particularly during the period before the Arab states themselves acquired nuclear weapons.

Were I to rewrite the article today, I would stress much more the pressures that would be on Israel to relinquish the territories as it moved toward a strategy of nuclear deterrence. These pressures would surely come from this country and they would be severe. Later, they would also come from the Arab states once the latter began to acquire nuclear weapons, since an Israeli threat to use these weapons over the Sinai or the Golan Heights simply would not be credible. Finally, a nuclearized Middle East in which the Palestinians were not taken into account would unquestionably threaten the stability of the deterrent balance. The Arab states might, and in all probability would, be much more careful about the actions they permit the Palestinian guerrillas to take from their territories against Israel. Even so, some Arab states (e.g., Lebanon) might be unable to control these activities, while other Arab states (e.g., Syria) might be unwilling to control them, despite the risks thereby run.

I should have emphasized the above, just as I should have emphasized more the desirability of a territorial settlement (including a Palestinian state) occurring in the same period that Israel acquired its nuclear deterrent. Nevertheless, even a mildly attentive and sympathetic reader could be expected to discern that this was the thrust of my argument. Had it not been, I would scarcely have made so much of the danger that Israel might use nuclear weapons to freeze the status quo. One does not normally point to "dangers" that one desires or, at most, is indifferent to. A strategy of nuclear deterrence was put forth, to repeat, in order to reduce the present dependence of Israel while affording it the means to concede what it is presently, and rightly, unwilling to concede. Even more, this strategy was put forth to deprive Israel of further justification both for holding on to what it took in 1967 and for resisting the creation of a Palestinian state (with or without Arafat).

THE critics have nevertheless managed to overlook—or simply to dismiss—much of this. Mr. Schroeder proceeds on the assumption that apart from the introduction of nuclear weapons, little else has changed. In somewhat lesser degree, so do Yair Evron and Stanley Hoffmann. The Israelis arm with nuclear weapons. Eventually, if the Israelis allow them, the Arab states do so as well. The nuclear forces presumably must be exposed first-strike forces, since the parties will not have the resources and technology to develop secure second-strike forces. The Arabs will remain, as ever, given to irrational behavior. Moreover, since little will be resolved, the Arabs will have something to be emotional—if not irrational—over. Extreme instability reigns. The stage is thus set for the apocalypse, which must eventually engulf the superpowers and the world. In these circumstances, the strains between Israel and the United States will make present difficulties between the two countries appear modest by comparison. Confronted with the choice of nuclear confrontation with Moscow or of abandoning Israel, Washington would probably take the latter course.

It will be apparent to the reader that this criticism is based throughout on worst-case assumptions. If one accepts them, then the proposal I have urged would indeed eventuate, if pursued, in catastrophe. But if one accepts the general view that informs this criticism, it is very likely that we shall suffer catastrophe in any event. For the very arguments used by opponents of nuclearization—above all, that the balance of terror will not work in the Middle East because distrust and hostility are too deep—lead to the conclusion that nuclearization cannot be prevented. The very distrust seen as making a balance of terror inherently unstable in the Middle East prompts the conclusion that it will be next to impossible to prevent the parties concerned from eventually obtaining nuclear weapons. At least, this must be reckoned as the probable outcome unless the great powers were to step in, compel a solution to the conflict, and enforce a nuclear-free zone. The prospects for this do not appear very good.

If this is the case, we have a choice between catastrophe by design and catastrophe through drift. Why must we accept this conclusion? Why must we accept, for example, the argument that the design of a relatively invulnerable second-strike force is beyond the capability of Israel or, in time, of the Arab states? This is, after all, the technical issue that is crucial to the matter at hand. Mr. Hoffmann appears to believe it cannot be resolved. Mr. Evron is less sure, but asserts that if it could it would be terribly expensive and increase Israeli dependence on the United States. Mr. Schroeder manages mainly to confuse the matter by relating it to a dozen other considerations, but he too clearly has his doubts.

DESPITE the considerable body of expert opinion that on technical grounds remains skeptical about the prospects for a stable system of mutual deterrence in the Middle East, the issue is an open one. It cannot be usefully addressed by the stereotyped thinking about invulnerable weapons systems that evolved in the 1950's. There is no need to project our own experience onto the Middle East situation and, on balance, it is probably misleading to do so. Polaris submarines and other highly sophisticated delivery systems are not indispensable to achieving the invulnerability required for a second-strike force. A delivery system of aircraft admittedly would present special difficulties and arouse strong doubts about its stability as a deterrent. But this is not the only option for Israel. It is probably already within Israel's capability to develop miniature warheads for medium-range missiles, and if not, it will soon be. These missiles may be placed in underground reinforced silos. Alternatively, they may be secured against attack through continuous mobility. It is only reasonable to assume that one day similar forces will be maintained by the Arab states as well.

The deterrent forces need not be large. On the Israeli side, a strike force of between fifteen and twenty vehicles with atomic bombs (or warheads) of quite modest yield would probably suffice, since there

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

David, King of Israel

Jules Maidoff

Original, hand signed and numbered etching Edition limited to 200

This graphic adventure blends the richly textured and fascinating interplay of an ancient subject in a modern treatment. In soft tones of sepia, the etching measures 16″ x 17¾″ on a hand-made ivory-colored sheet 21″ x 29½″.

From our exciting variety of signed originals, this work is an exceptional purchase, likely to increase in value over the years. (Mr. Maidoff's work in galleries starts at $75.00.) This signed and numbered etching of King David is available to readers of Commentary for only $60.00.

Maidoff's rare gifts have not gone unnoticed. His many exhibitions have been warmly and enthusiastically received by the critics in Philadelphia, New York, Rome, Milan, Florence, Lugano (Switzerland), Washington, D.C., Manhasset, Westhampton, New Hope, Bethesda, and private collections both in this country and in Europe.

"Jules Maidoff, a fine young American painter and draftsman, works within the humanist tradition of western art. Maidoff's work reveals the human condition in a highly personal way, yet it is universal in its impact because of his sensitive and poetic approach."

Oriole Farb, Director
Riverside Museum, New York

"An expressionist manner in his figure subjects with vigorous color and solid statement." **—New York Times**

COMMENTARY 165 East 56th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022. I have enclosed my check for $_____ to cover the cost of_____ numbered and signed impressions of DAVID, KING OF ISRAEL by Jules Maidoff, @ $60.00 each, including postage and insurance. If I am not completely satisfied, I may return this work in good condition, insured, within ten days and you will send me a refund.

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE ZIP CODE

ARTICLE CONTENT ABRIDGED
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PUBLISH YOUR BOOK IN 90 DAYS

Wanted: book manuscripts on all subjects. Expert editing, design, manufacture and marketing—all under one roof. Completed books in 90 days. Low break-even. Two FREE books and literature give details, costs, success stories. Write or phone Dept. 371

EXPOSITION PRESS, INC.
900 So. Oyster Bay Rd., Hicksville, N.Y. 11801
(516) 822-5700 (212) 895-0081

JERUSALEM OF LITHUANIA

A picture album and thematic guidebook for 500 years of Jewish life and creativity in Vilna, compiled by Leyzer Ran. 3,000 pictures and documents, with explanations in English, Yiddish, Hebrew, and Russian. 3 volumes—1,000 pages in folio. $40.00 (plus $2.00 postage).

Send your order, address, and check to:
Vilno in Pictures, Inc.
34-40 93rd Street
Jackson Heights, N.Y. 11372

"This beautiful album . . . has given the Jews of Vilna a life eternal in pictorial history . . . the true gift of historical remembrance."

Lucy S. Dawidowicz, COMMENTARY

The fountain pen that never went out of style

Classics never go out of style. The Pelikan 120 is the great classic fountain pen from Germany, long a favorite of European pen purists. (Now available in America.)

Large visible ink chamber. Convenient screw-plunger filling mechanism. Controlled ink flow. In elegant all-black or two-tone black and green. Choice of ultra-smooth extra fine, fine or medium standard nibs. Also fine, medium, broad or medium oblique italic nibs.

Only $10.00 at artist material and pen shops as well as college book stores. Or send your check to Pentalic Corporation, 132 West 22nd St., New York, N.Y. 10011. State color and nib preference. Add 50¢ for handling.

Pelikan 120

are not that many suitable Arab targets. On the Arab side, an equally small force would prove sufficient given the relatively few targets in Israel. These targets are of course primarily the large urban centers. The deterrent system is thus the familiar one of mutual assured destruction. This causes people like Mr. Schroeder to wax indignant over the horrendous moral implications of such a strategy, despite the fact that he lives in a nation that has pursued this same strategy for many years.

There are many who believe that as between Israel and its Arab adversaries disparities in geographical size and population would give credibility to an Arab nuclear force though not to an Israeli force (I am assuming here forces of quite modest proportion). Interestingly enough, this belief is not found among Arab analysts who have studied the problem but among Israeli and pro-Israeli analysts. The reasoning is simply that Israel is a very small state (particularly without the territories taken in 1967), its population is very concentrated, and, in consequence, it is evidently vulnerable to considerable damage from only a handful of nuclear weapons. The Arabs, on the other hand, have a very large territory with a population many times that of Israel, and though this population too is concentrated, it is not nearly so concentrated as is Israel's. The conclusion often drawn from this reasoning is that while an Israeli deterrent of the size indicated above would not be credible, a truly credible Israeli deterrent would have to be very large. Even with a very large deterrent, it is argued, Israel would be at a psychological disadvantage, and a very considerable one, since in a nuclear exchange it would very likely be literally destroyed while the Arabs, though badly damaged, would still survive.

These are admittedly unpleasant considerations. Are they persuasive, however, in undermining the credibility of an Israeli deterrent strategy? The size of pre-1967 Israel is sufficient to contain an invulnerable second-strike force. At least no one to my knowledge has persuasively demonstrated the contrary. There is, of course, no gainsaying the fact that Israel's population is highly concentrated and highly vulnerable. But the critical issue is whether Israel's adversaries are sufficiently vulnerable to nuclear attack to make a modest-size Israeli nuclear force credible and effective as a deterrent. In cold and bleak terms, would an Egyptian government be deterred by the prospect of the destruction of Cairo, Alexandria, and the Aswan, or a Syrian government by the destruction of Damascus and Aleppo? Further targets might be added to this list, but the point should be clear enough. Academic analysts might occasionally be impressed by the disparities noted above. Governments controlled by other than madmen are not impressed by the calculation that although the enemy will be destroyed, they will lose "only" a third of their population, their principal cities, their historic treasures, etc.

One can only speculate on how a system of mutual deterrence—or, rather, mutual assured destruction—might evolve in the Middle East. In such speculation it seems only reasonable to assume that past experience has at least a limited relevance to the present case. The critics point out that the Middle Eastern conflict is quite different from the Soviet-American and Soviet-Chinese confrontations. And so it is. But my point was not to equate the conflicts, which would be absurd. Instead, it was to recall the dire predictions of yesterday that attended Soviet and Chinese entrance into the nuclear club and to suggest that the Middle Eastern protagonists might also learn to cope with the demanding requirements brought by the possession of nuclear weapons. Even more, I argued that in this instance, as in past cases, nuclear weapons would bring more prudent and moderate behavior. The critics, however, will have none of this because they assume that the depth of the conflict generally, and the intensity of the territorial aspects of the conflict particularly, will make prudent and moderate behavior quite unlikely—at least on the Arab side.

Once again, the point must be made that if the conflict is such that it must prove refractory even to the compulsions of nuclear weapons, this can only mean that the participants will in any event sooner or later acquire nuclear weapons and sooner or later act out their common destiny. I see no reason for accepting this view. The Israelis may not have shown the greatest wisdom in the period immediately following the 1967 war,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EIGHT QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK ABOUT JUDAISM

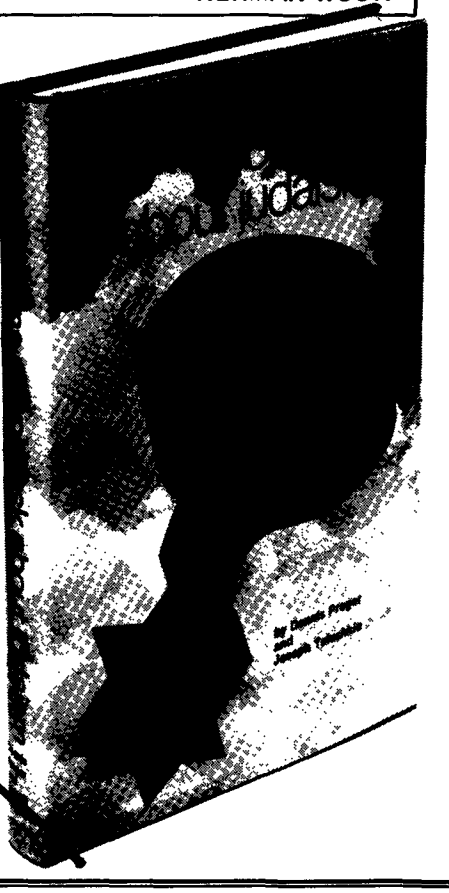
by Dennis Prager and Joseph Telushkin

"I congratulate you . . . You have actually written the intelligent skeptic's guide to Judaism."
— HERMAN WOUK

For four years Prager and Telushkin spoke to Jewish audiences throughout the world; everywhere the questions were the same:

THE EIGHT QUESTIONS

1. Do I have to believe in God to be a good Jew?
2. Who needs organized religion or Jewish laws — isn't it enough to be an ethical person?
3. If Judaism is supposed to make people better, how does one account for unethical religious Jews?
4. How does Judaism differ from:
   a) Christianity?
   b) Marxism and Communism?
   c) Ethical Humanism?
5. What is the Jewish role in the world?
6. Why are so many young Jews alienated from Jewish life?
7. Why shouldn't I intermarry — doesn't Judaism advocate universal brotherhood?
8. How does one start acting Jewish?



EIGHT QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK ABOUT JUDAISM is a powerful new work which presents Judaism as the rational moral alternative for contemporary man.

CRITICAL RESPONSE

REFORM

"I would suggest that on a single afternoon every rabbi, YMHA director, Jewish college instructor and anyone else who has contact with young Jewish adults, should...read EIGHT QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK ABOUT JUDAISM. They could then spend the next few decades recommending and quoting from this excellent book."

Rabbi Paul Kushner, Associate Director
Synagogue Advisory Council of New York U.J.A./Federation
JEWISH WEEK, August 23, 1975

CONSERVATIVE

"...a unique book."
Rabbi Samuel Dresner

ORTHODOX

"Perhaps the best book written explaining the fundamental concepts and the unique characteristics of the Jewish heritage...."
Rabbi Steven Riskin
Lincoln Square Synagogue (New York)
Associate Professor of Talmud, Yeshiva University

COLLEGE STUDENTS

"I just finished reading EIGHT QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK ABOUT JUDAISM to see if we might use it in Hillel classes and/or conversion programs. Regardless of how we use it, it is dynamite...."
Marcie Schoenberg, Coordinator of Student Activities, University of California (Los Angeles)

At your bookstore or order by mail or by phone.

Please send _____ copies of EIGHT QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK ABOUT JUDAISM.

☐ I enclose $7.50 per copy (N.Y. State residents add appropriate tax). Publisher will pay postage and handling.

☐ Please bill me. I will pay postage, handling and billing.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

TZE ULMAD PRESS
162-40 Ninth Avenue
Whitestone, New York 11357
24 hour telephone: (212) 767-8938

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but this cannot be taken to mean that once in possession of a nuclear deterrent they would pursue a policy which unnecessarily courted suicidal risk. Certainly, there is nothing in the Israeli record to indicate such propensity. Nor, for that matter, is there credible evidence to support the widely held persuasion that the rationality required by nuclear weapons is incompatible with the "Arab mind." It is one thing to point to continued Arab incompetence in waging modern conventional warfare, and quite another to argue that Arab regimes have shown reckless and irrational disregard for the consequences of their actions.

Given what we know today, an Israeli nuclear force would precede an Arab force by a number of years. It is during this period that Israel would have to settle its territorial conflicts with its Arab adversaries. Moreover, it would have every incentive for doing so. The nuclear lead would be only a temporary one. At best, it would provoke American opposition and at worst threaten a break with America that Israel could not afford, given what would surely be its continued broad dependence on this country. Mr. Hoffmann asks: "How could Washington force a nuclear Israel to do what it has never been able (or willing) to oblige an utterly dependent nonnuclear Israel to do?" The answer is that a nuclear Israel, if recalcitrant, would be under far greater American pressure to do what it would *then* have little, if any, justification for not doing. An attempt to freeze the status quo would not only keep tensions at a high level, it would give the Arabs greatly added incentive for pushing as fast as possible to obtain nuclear arms while maintaining high levels of conventional arms. Even with a temporary monopoly of nuclear arms, Israel would be reluctant to threaten nuclear reprisals over Arab attempts to regain the occupied territories (just as it would be reluctant to threaten nuclear reprisals against states harboring and supporting Palestinian guerrilla activities). If Israelis are still very reluctant to accept nuclear weapons in defense of the Israeli heartland, they would be doubly reluctant to accept these weapons in defense of the occupied territories. But defense of the latter by conventional weapons would continue to require the maintenance of large conventional forces and thus negate one of the benefits of nuclear weapons, which is to permit a reduction of conventional arms.

These considerations, it may be argued, *might* still be rejected. Israel *might* still try to use a temporary advantage to freeze the status quo, whatever the short- and long-term costs. I have no answer to this argument, save to point out that if Israel were to follow this course it would betray a monumental folly. This is only to acknowledge that no political analysis of the sort undertaken here can pretend to resolve all uncertainties and answer all objections. The Israelis, in possession of an invulnerable nuclear deterrent, might behave foolishly and in disregard of their true interests. The strong likelihood is that they would not do so, not only for the reasons already given but because of an awareness that their nuclear advantage was a wasting asset. Once the principal Arab states acquired nuclear forces, a policy of holding on to the occupied territories would become extremely difficult and dangerous. At that time, an Israeli nuclear threat with respect to the occupied territories would no longer be credible. To be sure, this would still leave the problem of the Palestinians. Even here, however, the Israelis would be at a growing disadvantage since a policy of limited conventional reprisal against Arab states harboring guerrilla forces would entail heavy risk.

IN SUM, the logic of nuclearizing is to push the parties toward a settlement of their territorial conflicts as well as toward coexistence (not friendship but coexistence). On the Israeli side, a changed security framework would no longer permit holding to the status quo in the name of security. Moreover, those intent on realizing their dream of a greater Israel would be forced to face up to the price that dream could one day entail. On the Arab side, nuclearization would almost certainly discredit those holding to the goal of destroying the "Zionist state," and particularly so once a territorial settlement were reached and a Palestinian state created. The dangers held out by nuclear war are not difficult to compre-

The Manpower Connection
Education and Work
Eli Ginzberg

Eli Ginzberg heads the National Commission for Manpower Policy, the principal group advising the President and the Congress on employment policy.

Read *The Manpower Connection* for his views on education, work, and manpower.

Find out what he thinks about unemployment. Blue collar workers. Working women. Worker alienation, reform, and the work ethic.

And above all, read *The Manpower Connection* for his views on the government's employment promises, programs, and policies. $15.00

Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 02138

WORKING PAPERS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hend. Illiteracy is not a bar to understanding here. No Arab leader is going to evoke enthusiasm by urging military action against a nuclear Israel. In all probability, no Arab leader will want to do so, provided that he has something to lose. And with the emergence of a Palestinian state, everyone will have something to lose.

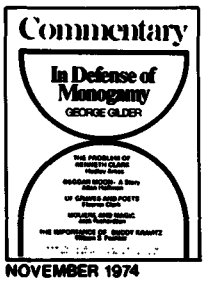
In getting from here to there some risks must inevitably be run. The critics of nuclearization see only the risks, which they magnify, and none of the advantages. Mr. Schroeder is an extreme example of this. He has gathered together all possible risks, added some imaginary ones, put the worst possible construction on them, and thrown in—for good measure—analogies the relevance of which often escapes me. Mr. Evron is much more restrained, but he too concedes no advantages to nuclearization while finding only disadvantages. According to his analysis, the introduction of nuclear weapons would have little, if any, effect on levels of conventional weapons maintained and on corresponding strategic doctrines. It would simply add to Israel's military budget and strain its relations with this country. Mr. Hoffmann shares many of the fears of Mr. Schroeder and agrees with him that an Israeli nuclear strategy would probably lead the United States to dissociate itself from Israel, particularly in a crisis.

I have tried to respond to many of these points, but the last one deserves a final word. There is no apparent reason why the United States should take punitive action against an Israel that sought to go nuclear, though showing at the same time great flexibility on the territorial issues and the Palestinians, provided that Washington is not primarily interested in keeping Israel as dependent as possible. It is, of course, always possible that future crises may arise (following the settlement of territorial issues) and, in a nuclear environment, raise the specter of nuclear war. In this case, it is said, the United States might well consider that its interests required dissociation from Israel. But this is not a criticism of the argument I have made. It is precisely one of the prime purposes of pursuing a strategy of nuclear deterrence that it permits one, in a moment of supreme crisis, to endure the threat of dissociation and still retain control over one's destiny.

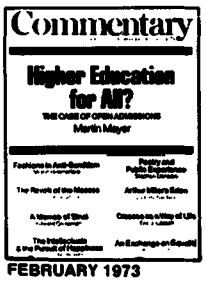
WHILE THEY LAST—

Complete your file of Commentary or send for past issues with articles of special interest—like those shown here—at $2.00 each.

JANUARY 1975

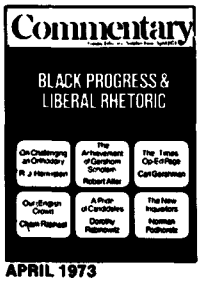


NOVEMBER 1974

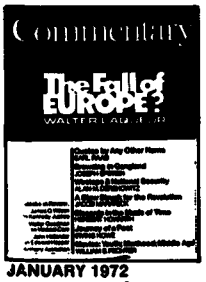


FEBRUARY 1973

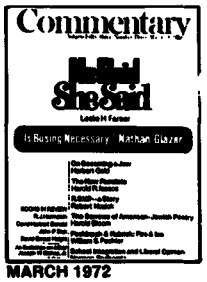
OCTOBER 1973



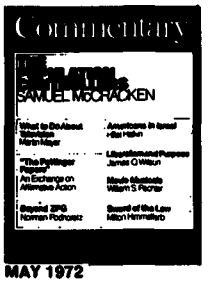
APRIL 1973



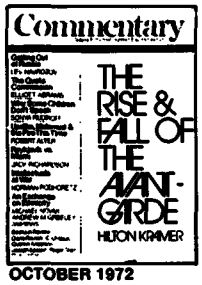
JANUARY 1972



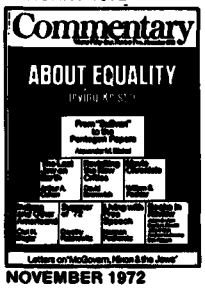
MARCH 1972



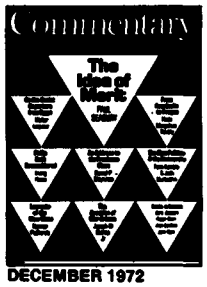
MAY 1972



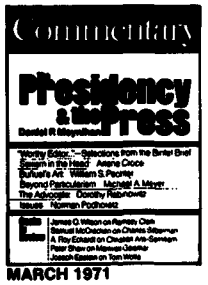
OCTOBER 1972



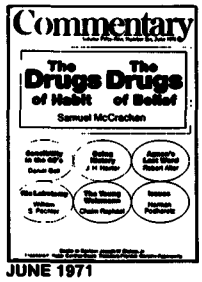
NOVEMBER 1972



DECEMBER 1972

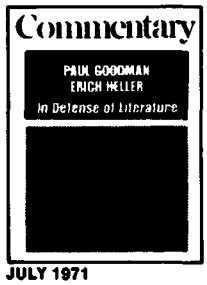


MARCH 1971

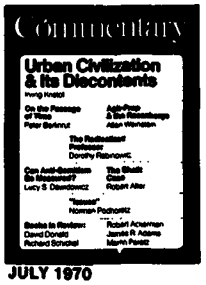


JUNE 1971

OCTOBER 1971



JULY 1971



JULY 1970

In limited quantities, most issues from the past ten years are still available—as listed below. **CIRCLE THE ONES YOU WANT,** and return the form with prepayment—promptly, to insure receiving those in short supply.

Commentary, 165 East 56 Street, New York, N.Y. 10022

Enclosed is my check for $_____ for the _____ back issues circled below at $2 each including postage and handling.

1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975
—	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	—	—	Jan		Jan	Jan
—	Feb	Feb	Feb	Feb	—	Feb	Feb	Feb	Feb	Feb
—	—	Mar	Mar	Mar	—	Mar	Mar	Mar		Mar
—	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr		Apr	Apr
—	May	—	May	—	—	May	May	May	May	May
June	June	June	June	June	—	June	June			June
July	July	July	—	July	—	July	July	July	July	July
—	—	—	—	Aug	Aug	—	Aug	Aug	Aug	—
—	Sept	Sept	Sept	—	Sept	Sept	Sept		Sept	Sept
—	Oct	Oct	Oct	Oct	—	Oct	—	Oct	Oct	—
Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov	—	Nov	Nov	Nov	Nov		—
Dec	Dec	—	Dec	—	Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec	

Name_____

Address_____

City, State & Zip Code_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The natural gas to heat Julie's home in years to come is locked in dense rock, more than a mile down.

We're working today to shake it loose.

As long as Julie has a warm home, winter is a wonderful time. But the natural gas supply to heat Julie's home, and 42 million others in America, has been decreasing for several years.

If we don't find ways to get more gas, we'll have a real problem.

At the Wattenberg Field, in Colorado, Amoco discovered enough natural gas for about three million homes for a year. But the gas was trapped in dense rock more than a mile underground.

So Amoco tried something different. We pumped three million pounds of sand and fluid down wells at tremendous pressure. It split the rock, creating a fracture that unlocked the gas. This advanced technique costs much more than any other method Amoco ever used before. But it worked.

Where it's feasible, this costly technique could unlock other tight rock reservoirs and increase our country's future natural gas supply.

So when Julie gets cold in years to come, her home will still be warm.

AMOCO

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Appeasement & Détente

Theodore Draper

APPEASEMENT became a dirty word in the 1930's. It had been, for centuries, a perfectly clean, even a virtuous term. How could a word that had meant peace and conciliation turn into its opposite? The transformation came when it began to be used in connection with the concessions to and deals made with the fascist dictatorships in the 1930's. The turning point was probably the speeches by Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain in the House of Commons on October 3 and 6, 1938. Just back from Munich, where he had agreed to tear off a vital part of Czechoslovakia and hand it over to Hitler's Germany, he spoke exultantly about "our policy of appeasement," of which the Munich agreement was to be only the first step. He looked forward to "the collaboration of all nations, not excluding the totalitarian states, in building up a lasting peace for Europe." The "real triumph," he said, was the execution of "a difficult and delicate operation by discussion instead of by force of arms."

A year later, force of arms instead of discussion made it almost impossible to say the word "appeasement" without shame and loathing. The word, of course, was not to blame. But why had it been misused? Why did it turn into such a ghastly mockery? Clearly—though this is not the whole story—because appeasement could not appease the unappeasable. In those circumstances it was betrayal and capitulation on the installment plan. The stench of the Munich agreement might not have been so sickening if it had been recognized for what it was. What made it so unbearable was its glorification, such as this memorable tribute in the London *Times*: "No conqueror returning from a victory on the battlefield has come home with nobler laurels than Mr. Chamberlain from Munich yesterday."

Détente is another one of those perfectly good words that, misapplied, gets a bad name. It appears to be a relatively recent importation from the French. The first citation in the Oxford English Dictionary is dated 1908. The word is usually defined as a "relaxation of tension," which may mean much or little depending on what kind of tension is being relaxed by how much. At the 1974 hearings on détente of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, speaker after speaker complained that the word was hard to pin down. Former Ambassador George F. Kennan said that he had "never fully understood the use of the word 'détente' in connection with" Soviet-American relations. In response, former Senator J. W. Fulbright remarked that "détente is a difficult word to have inherited in this connection, but I think we are stuck with it." Former Senator Eugene McCarthy commented that "the meaning has changed every time it is applied." Professor Marshall Shulman referred to "the ambiguities of the word 'détente,'" and Professor Herbert Dinerstein pointed out that "everyone has a different notion about what détente is." Former Secretary of State Dean Rusk said it was a "process," not a "condition." Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger agreed that "it is a continuing process, not a final condition."[1*] An academic definition has made it into "a logical spectrum of relations along which conflict either increases or decreases."[2]

Not only is it difficult even for experts to define détente but, whatever it is, it would seem to be fluctuating and ambiguous. In theory, it has been situated somewhere between cold war and rapprochement or even entente. Since détente moves uneasily between these two poles, it occupies a purely relative position, without a definite profile of its own. This conception of détente is always moving away or moving toward something else.[3] No wonder, then, that détente according to this theory has been so hard to pin down; it is by its very nature transitory and volatile.

In practice, however, the current Soviet-American détente should have a much more positive and recognizable character. The materialization of détente was supposed to be the main achievement of the summit meeting in Moscow in May 1972 at which the new phase of Soviet-American relations was formally inaugurated. It consisted of three agreements—military, commercial, and political. The military agreement took the form of SALT I,

THEODORE DRAPER is the author *of Israel and World Politics, Abuse of Power, The Dominican Revolt,* and other works on international affairs. His many articles in COMMENTARY include "The United States & Israel" (April 1975), "Détente" (June 1974), and "From 1967 to 1973: The Arab-Israeli Wars" (December 1973).

* Numbered notes are to be found at the conclusion of this article, on page 38.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

providing in principle for quantitative parity in antiballistic missiles. The commercial agreement set up a U.S.-USSR commission to promote trade and development of economic resources. The political agreement was embodied in the "Basic Principles of Relations Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics." These three agreements gave this détente some substance and delineation. Détente could not be all that vague and ambiguous if it had "Basic Principles," no matter what they might be or whether or not they were lived up to.

Most of the debate on détente has made it appear that the only alternatives are détente and cold war. Any criticism of the current version of détente is sure to bring forth in tones of incredulity the horrified challenge: "Do you mean to say that you want to go back to the cold war?" That the cold war may not be the only alternative to détente seems to have escaped notice. It might also be asked, with equal incredulity and horror: "Do you want to go back to 'appeasement'?" In fact, an even more incredible question to some might be: "Do you realize that appeasement was built into détente?"

Let us see.

II

Détente has been so confusing not because there is a lack of definitions and interpretations but because there have been too many. There is not only an American version but different American versions. There is not only a Soviet version but different Soviet versions.

The original American theory of détente was developed, largely by Henry Kissinger, in 1972. The main concept behind it was the "linkage" of the military, the economic, and the political. The idea, as he explained it, was "to move forward on a very broad front on many issues" in order to create many "vested interests" on both sides.

After the Moscow "linkage," Kissinger was euphoric. He extolled SALT I as an "agreement without precedent in all relevant modern history." The summit meeting had been so successful, he reported, that the American side had achieved all that it had planned and had expected to achieve, "give or take 10 per cent"[4]—an extraordinary record for any diplomatic conference. For Prime Minister Chamberlain, Munich had brought "peace in our time." For President Nixon, Moscow had made possible "a new structure of peace in the world."

The second thoughts were not so ecstatic. It became increasingly clear that SALT I had been little more than a promissory note. In 1974, Secretary Kissinger himself said that, if a more far-reaching follow-up nuclear agreement were not reached "well before 1977, then I believe you will see an explosion of technology and an explosion of numbers" of fearsome proportions.[5] In that same year, Professor George B. Kistiakowsky, one of the most eminent and experienced experts in the field, testified: "The SALT I agreements do not inhibit or limit the strategic-arms race. They merely channel it into such directions as each side perceives to be militarily most advantageous to it." He characterized the antiballistic-missile treaty as "to a large degree another agreement not to do something that neither party wants to do anyway."[6] Despite the onrush of 1977, SALT II shows no signs of coming through in time to stop the technology-and-numbers explosion.

SALT I may have been oversold, and, to that extent, may have made the "linkage" with the commercial agreement even more expensive than it needed to be. But even if SALT I had been all that Kissinger had hoped for it, its linkage with the commercial agreement would still have been based on a theory that built appeasement into détente. It is this aspect of détente that should be more clearly understood.

On the American side, it was always recognized that the Soviets were mainly interested in détente for economic reasons.[7] The basic Soviet reason flowed from a declining rate of growth and productivity. According to official Soviet data, this rate fell from 10.9 per cent in 1950-58 to 7.2 per cent in 1958-67 to 6.4 per cent in 1967-73; Western recalculations of the Soviet figures show the actual decline to be from 6.4 per cent in 1950-58 to 5.3 per cent in 1958-67 to 3.7 per cent in 1967-73.[8] By 1966, the problem was already so troublesome that Prime Minister Aleksei Kosygin had called for abandonment of economic isolationism to prevent the Soviet economy from falling too far behind. A key reason for the Soviet dilemma was the failure to keep up with the advanced technology of the West. At first the Brezhnev regime had tried to overcome this weakness through earlier détentes with France and Germany. But by 1972, the American-Soviet détente made the United States the main source of scientific-technological transfer.

There was, however, a hitch. The Soviets were unable to pay for what they wanted. They demanded large-scale, long-term U.S. government credits at abnormally low interest rates. They sought most-favored-nation status without being able to reciprocate. They wanted the delivery of entire factories and plants on terms which meant that the Soviet Union would do all the owning and the Western donors would take all the risks. If anything went wrong, the Soviet Union and a few favored capitalists could not—and only the American taxpayer would—lose.*

* Hedrick Smith, the former New York *Times* correspondent in Moscow, has told of a "joke" that circulated within the Soviet establishment on the eve of Brezhnev's visit to the United States in June 1973: "Brezhnev . . . asked his advisers what he should seek in America. 'Ask them to sell us cars,' suggested one. 'Ask them to build us computer factories,' said a second. 'Ask them to build atomic-power stations,' said a third. 'No,' replied Brezhnev thoughtfully. 'I'll just ask them to build us Communism'" (*Atlantic Monthly*, December 1974).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This situation was made to order for one of Kissinger's beguiling theories—at least, enough people were beguiled to put it across. It was the theory of "incentives." According to Secretary Kissinger, the Soviets were advised in 1970 and 1971, in advance of the agreement on détente, that they could get paid off in credits and most-favored-nation treatment "if they engaged in what we considered responsible international behavior."[9] A Kissingerian formulation of the incentive-payment theory went as follows:

> We see it [economic relations] as a tool to bring about or to reinforce a more moderate orientation of foreign policy and to provide incentives for responsible international behavior and, *therefore, it has to be seen in this context.*[10]

An academic exponent of détente explained for popular consumption that trade, technology, and investment "would serve to offer a continuing incentive to Soviet leaders to accept the constraints of a low-tension policy." These incentives could be "regulated," he assured his readers, so that "our resources are not used to strengthen Soviet military capabilities"—as if it were possible to draw a line between the civilian and military uses of natural gas, petrochemicals, computers, and truck factories—and so that "the political competition is conducted with restraint"—as if restraint were not as much in the Soviet as in the American interest without incentive payments.[11]

The most important American incentive payments to the Soviets have been economic. This relationship has been inherently unequal. If all went well, Americans could benefit through profits and jobs. So far, many deals have failed and a few have succeeded, so that the profits from increased Soviet-American trade have gone to a few favored or fortunate entrepreneurs. The Soviets, however, have an altogether larger stake in the relationship. They want to get out of it a structural change in their economy and a bail-out mechanism for their agriculture. This economic exchange is not an ordinary one; the Western contribution to the Soviet economy is heavy with political and military significance.

The most recent study by Professor Marshall I. Goldman of how the economic détente has worked is not reassuring. Professor Goldman is not an enemy of détente or of Soviet-American trade—quite the contrary. Yet his cautionary analysis of what has been going on in the name of détente is most disturbing:

> The types of goods and the types of negotiating tactics the Russians tend to use in purchasing goods from the United States make it possible for the Russians to obtain high technology products for bargain prices that no other buyers could cajole. Moreover, much of the technology and sometimes the products themselves have been heavily subsidized by the American taxpayer. The initial subsidy for development and production, the bargain prices, and the subsidized interest rate of the Export-Import Bank means that the Russians are often able to obtain a triple subsidy on their American purchases.

These advantages, Professor Goldman adds, have an important political component built into them.[11a] One does not have to believe that the Soviets obtain all the benefits to see that the incentive theory works mainly in the Soviets' favor.

Curiously, the Soviets never bothered to develop a similar theory or practice vis-à-vis the United States. In fact, the Soviets have pursued a contrary course, at times most inconvenient for the United States. For example, until March 1974, months after the Arab-Israeli war was over, the Soviets urged the Arab oil producers to continue their embargo against the Western states and Japan.[12] This Soviet exhortation was not a mere peccadillo; it was a potentially deadly attack on the economic lifeline of the Western powers and Japan. The incentive theory seemed to work only one way.

KISSINGER had another theory which should have made incentive payments unnecessary. It was the theory of "marginal advantages." He first produced it during the 1972 summit meeting in Moscow and kept repeating it until events proved it to be a conceptual breakdown instead of a conceptual breakthrough. In one of his clearest formulations of this embarrassing memory, he maintained that "to the extent that balance of power means constant jockeying for marginal advantages over an opponent, it no longer applies." He explained why:

> The reason is that the determination of national power has changed fundamentally in the nuclear age. Throughout history, the primary concern of most national leaders has been to accumulate geopolitical and military power. It would have seemed inconceivable even a generation ago that such power once gained could not be translated directly into advantage over one's opponent. But now both we and the Soviet Union have begun to find that each increment of power does not necessarily represent an increment of usable political strength.[13]

This theory made the whole Kissingerian system of détente seem absurdly easy to operate. It was, in fact, a "self-regulating mechanism"—the diplomatic equivalent of perpetual motion. It ruled out "marginal advantages" and "increments of usable political strength" in the nuclear age by making them inherently "unrealistic" and catastrophically "dangerous."[14] Unfortunately, the Soviet leaders again failed to respond with a similar theory. Only a year later, their policy and actions in the Middle East were clearly based on an altogether different theory of what the nuclear age permitted in the way of struggling for "marginal advantages." Kissinger himself must have recognized

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that his theory, not "marginal advantages," was unrealistic and dangerous or he would not have bothered to respond to Soviet actions in the Middle East or Angola. After all, he should have reasoned, the Soviets were going after unusable and intangible "increments of power."

As if all this were not troublesome enough, Kissinger produced another, contradictory theory. In his testimony at the Senate hearings on his confirmation as Secretary of State, he delivered himself of this rule:

> But assuming the present balance holds, and granting the strategic significance of what we had both agreed upon, the increasing difficulty of conceiving a rational objective for general nuclear war makes it, therefore, less risky to engage in local adventures.[15]

One theory said that the nuclear age made "marginal advantages" unnecessary to worry about and, therefore, local adventures for such advantages less likely. Another theory said that the same nuclear age made local adventures "less risky" and, therefore, more likely.

What it all came down to in the end was an understanding of the political implications of the nuclear age. But before we get to this point, let us see what the Soviet view of détente has been.

III

In the "Basic Principles" of Soviet-American relations of May 29, 1972, the Soviets seemingly committed themselves to an interpretation of détente which fitted in with Kissinger's theory of "marginal advantages." These principles contained the following mutual restraints on engaging in "local adventures":

> Prevention of the development of situations capable of causing a dangerous exacerbation of Soviet-American relations.
>
> Doing the utmost to avoid military confrontations.
>
> Recognition that efforts to obtain unilateral advantage at the expense of the other, directly or indirectly, are inconsistent with these objectives.
>
> Special responsibility to do everything in their power so that conflicts or situations will not arise which would serve to increase international tensions.

These principles implied that there were two sides to détente—political and nuclear. The former was designed to prevent situations from developing which might bring on the danger of nuclear war. On ceremonial occasions, such as his speech at the Helsinki conference at the end of July 1975, Brezhnev has paid lip service to the combination of military and political détente.[16]

The "Basic Principles" also signified that détente applied not only to relations between the United States and the Soviet Union but also to the relations of each with the rest of the world. Kissinger has assured us that "we consider Soviet restraint in the Middle East an integral part of détente policy"[17] and "the principle of restraint is not confined to relations between the U.S. and the USSR, it is explicitly extended to include *all* countries."[18]

There seemed to be agreement, then, on two constituent elements of a true détente—it must apply to the political as well as to the nuclear realm, and it must apply to the relations of the United States and the Soviet Union with the rest of the world as well as to the relations between themselves.

However, there are Soviet theories underlying détente which, like the American, must be taken into account to find out what it really means. For example, a basic Soviet theory is that of the "new relationship of forces." It was expressed by Brezhnev not long ago in the following formula: "International détente has become possible because a new relationship of forces now exists on the world scene."[19]

What is this "new relationship of forces"? The short answer, spelled out in all Communist propaganda, is that the "new relationship of forces" now favors the "socialist world" led by the Soviet Union. The point here is not whether the theory is right or wrong. The point is that, for the Soviet Union and its followers, détente is not an abstract, ahistorical condition; it is the product of a concrete, historical "relationship of forces" which determines not merely what détente is but—far more important—what it does.

A second Soviet theory in this connection is that of the "two spheres." An authoritative exposition of this theory was recently given by Professor Georgi Arbatov, a high-level Soviet spokesman and present head of the Institute of the USA of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR:

> What is involved here [the policy of détente] is essentially different spheres of political life in our time (though they may influence one another in various ways). One of them is the sphere of social development, which steadily makes headway in any international conditions —whether détente, "cold" war, or even "hot" war. . . . The other is the sphere of inter-state relations, in which other extremely important questions are resolved—questions of war and peace, methods of resolving controversial foreign-policy questions, and possibilities for mutually advantageous international cooperation.
>
> The drawing of a clear line between these two spheres is one of the basic premises of the Leninist foreign policy of the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems. . . .[20]

In the pro-Soviet Communist movement, the theory of "peaceful coexistence" has been promulgated somewhat more clearly and starkly. It is now said that peaceful coexistence

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

refers exclusively to the domain of inter-state relations between socialist and capitalist countries. It rules out just one form of struggle between socialism and capitalism—the form of direct military collision.[21]

Formerly, as we have seen, détente was supposed to cover anything of a political or military nature which could exacerbate Soviet-American relations, give one side unilateral advantage at the expense of the other, or serve to increase international tension. The theory of the "two spheres" eliminates a huge political area—under the trade name of "social development"—from the domain of détente. By reducing détente to the avoidance of "direct military collision" between the United States and the Soviet Union, it leaves everything else wide open.

This tendency to shunt détente out of the political sphere into a narrow military sphere has now come to a head with the need to rationalize large-scale Soviet military intervention in Angola and the use of Cuban troops as Soviet proxies. A writer in *Izvestia* of November 29, 1975 insisted that it was impossible to bring "the sphere of class and national-liberation struggle" within "peaceful coexistence."[22] On November 30, an *Izvestia* correspondent reported that détente "gave a powerful impulse to the national-liberation movement of colonial and oppressed peoples."[23] On December 2, an *Izvestia* commentator held that "the process of détente does not mean and never meant the freezing of the social-political status quo in the world" or could prevent the Soviet Union from giving "sympathy, compassion, and support" to those whom it chose to represent as "fighters for national independence."[24] On December 6, a writer in *Pravda* boasted: "Détente created favorable conditions for the new successes of the cause of national liberation."[25] On December 8, a report in *Pravda* of an "international anti-fascist conference" brought these glad tidings: "The thought that runs all through the documents of the conference and the speeches of its participants is that the strengthening process of détente creates favorable conditions for the struggles of the popular masses against imperialism and neocolonialism, against all forms of fascism and internal reaction."[26]

These thoughts were not entirely new. The Soviet Union has long claimed the right to support "national-liberation movements." In the heyday of détente, however, this motif was muted in favor of emphasis on avoiding international friction. Now almost any action which the Soviet Union chooses to take that could cause a dangerous exacerbation of Soviet-American relations, obtain direct or indirect unilateral advantage, or increase international tensions is being conveniently classified as "class and national-liberation struggle." That the Soviet political line should be turned around to provide a propaganda smoke screen for military intervention on the west coast of Africa is something new and ominous. If this sort of intervention can be justified in the name of détente, almost anything short of direct conflict with the United States can be made to fit the "Basic Principles."

There are indications, too, of a general "left turn" in the line which the Soviet Union is pressing on the world Communist movement. One telltale sign was an article in *Pravda* of August 6, 1975, by K. Zaradov, editor-in-chief of the official pro-Soviet Communist organ, *Problems of Peace and Socialism (World Marxist Review* in the English version). Zaradov's article was clearly aimed at the French and Italian Communist parties rather than at the Chinese. He called them "present-day conciliators" whose "logic is the same as that of the Mensheviks"—storm signals in Communist political meteorology. Why this sudden outburst? Because, according to Zaradov, the present-day conciliators and quasi-Mensheviks "would like to dissolve it [the proletarian party] in an ideologically amorphous organization, in any alliance created according to the formula 'unity for unity's sake.' "[27] The point was not lost on the Italian and French Communists who protested against this onslaught in the official organ of the Soviet Communist party. How high up the inspiration for Zaradov's article had come from was soon made clear by an item in *Izvestia* of September 19. This unusual social note reported that General Secretary Brezhnev had received Zaradov and had congratulated him for his fine work.

Another indication has come from the American Communist party, the most slavishly pro-Soviet of the Western Communist parties. At its recent national convention, its General Secretary discovered that "in the U.S. in the 1970's monopoly capital is preparing the climate in which fascism can come to power."[28] Various roles have already been assigned—Governor George C. Wallace as the "leading fascist demagogue"; William F. Buckley, Jr., as an "adroit exponent of 'intellectual' fascism"; a curiously promiscuous company —William B. Shockley, Arthur Jensen, Richard Herrnstein, H. J. Eysenck, Christopher Jencks, Edward C. Banfield, Robert W. Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman—as "leading exponents" of "Nazi-like poison."[29] Since everyone knows that monopoly capital rules the United States, and now we know what monopoly capital is preparing, it does not take too much foresight to see where the Communist propaganda line is heading. The Soviets may soon be saving the entire world from the menace of American fascism.

All these aspects of Soviet policy—military intervention, political theorizing, Communist propaganda—are intimately related to the changing Soviet view of détente. Fundamental to all of them is one simple rule—that what always counts most is the relationship of forces, not the arrangement of words.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IV

THE Arab-Israeli war of October 1973 proved to be the first real test of the Soviet-American détente. It provided so clear a violation of the "basic principles" by the Soviet Union that even Secretary Kissinger had to admit as much, albeit in the relative obscurity of a Senate committee hearing. The violation concerned the message sent by Brezhnev to Algerian President Boumédienne and apparently to other Arab leaders telling them that it was their Arab duty to get into the war against Israel. Pressed by Senator Harry F. Byrd, Jr., Secretary Kissinger agreed, "Yes, I would say this was a violation."[30]*

Nothing more was heard of this awkward admission. All concerned would have benefited if more attention had been paid to it. Kissinger himself had testified that Soviet "restraint" in the Middle East was "an integral part of the détente policy." If it did not hold there, it was unlikely to hold wherever American and Soviet interests seriously clashed. In that case the détente relationship was relegated to taking care of relatively minor matters, leaving the major ones to a nuclear alert or rival military interventions. It can now be seen that the Middle East crisis of October 1973 was a dress rehearsal for the Angola crisis of 1975-76.

After the Middle East crisis, however, the American line on détente underwent some changes. The concept of détente is like an accordion; it can be stretched out or pulled in. It can be as broad as it seemed after the summit meeting of May 1972 or it can be as narrow as it became after October 1973. To take care of all possible contingencies, Kissinger began to stress the schizoid character of détente. It was, he explained in March 1974, "composed of both competition and cooperation" with "profound ambiguities at every stage of this relationship."[31] Later, he spoke of détente as if it were merely an improved method of communications, "a means by which a competition which is inevitable—in the nature of present circumstances—is regulated while reducing the danger of nuclear war."[32] It had become a means to an end which was contradictory and ambiguous, a regulatory system without an agency to do the regulating.

Above all, détente was now largely reduced to limiting "the risks of nuclear war," as Kissinger put it.[33] Former Senator J. William Fulbright could think of nothing better than: "Détente, in its essence, is an agreement not to let these differences [between the two superpowers] explode into nuclear war."[34] Professor Marshall Shulman instructed us that the main business of détente was "to reduce the danger of nuclear war."[35] The case for détente after October 1973 came essentially to rest on its relationship with nuclear war and on little else that was unambiguous and uncontradictory.

WE have now come to the heart of matter. It is right here—the relationship between détente and nuclear war.

Was there a meaningful "linkage" between nuclear war, economic-incentive payments, and political restraint? The American—or Kissingerian—theory and practice of détente was fundamentally dependent on a positive answer to this question. If the answer was negative, the entire American policy rested on a dubious foundation.

For the past thirty years, during hot wars, cold wars, and détentes, nuclear weapons have not been used. They were not used by the United States when it had a nuclear monopoly, even when its forces were decimated by Chinese Communist troops in Korea, even when the United States suffered defeat in the longest and most humiliating war in its history in Vietnam. There is obviously something about nuclear warfare that has set it apart from all other forms of warfare in which we still engage. There is something about nuclear weapons which cannot be fitted into hot wars, cold wars, or détentes. The nuclear war, as much as any type of war can be, must as yet be regarded as *sui generis*. We still have no experience with it; we cannot fathom its bottomless depths of pure nihilism; we cannot imagine a rational use for it.

With the nuclear weapon we reached the *reductio ad absurdum* of all warfare—a weapon that was *too destructive*. This was already the lesson when the United States still had a monopoly of it. As soon as the Soviet Union became an atomic and then a nuclear power, we achieved a higher stage of military "absurdity"—a weapon that was *too mutually destructive*. This second stage was reached by the mid-1950's, so that we have been in it for about two decades.[36] The third stage came in the late 1960's when the United States realized that the Soviet Union would achieve rough nuclear parity. The "absurdity" had now arrived at its final destination—the power of *mutual annihilation*.

In exasperation, Secretary Kissinger once dramatically exclaimed:

> And one of the questions which we have to ask ourselves as a country is what, in the name of God, is strategic superiority? What is the significance of it, politically, militarily, operationally, at these levels of numbers? What do you do with it?[37]

It was, as the saying goes, a good question. It implied that on the level of mutual annihilation it

* The exchange just before this one is worth pondering:

Senator Byrd: On the question of harassment, which is one of the key points of the Jackson amendment, is not the entire system of government in Russia based on harassment and terror, as a practical matter?

Secretary Kissinger: Well, I think the government is more obtrusive than in our country (p. 88).

Obtrusive!

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mattered little how much more annihilating a nuclear power could or would become. It also implied that there was no political "significance" to be attached to those incomprehensibly high levels of destructiveness. Nuclear warfare cannot be weighed in political scales or translated into political terms. Politics, so to speak, is sub-nuclear. Thus Kissinger himself inferentially cut the ground from under the nuclear-political linkage.

The control of nuclear warfare, then, is of an order so different from the control of "conventional" warfare, let alone the control of political and ideological rivalries, that the former must be dealt with as something apart. Just as nuclear warfare has resisted every calculus of political or economic usefulness, so, too, it is not amenable to political blandishments or economic payoffs. The enormity of the nuclear problem defies all past human experience. This is not to say that the human race need or should resign itself to the ever-present threat of nuclear annihilation; it means that the threat must be faced on its own terms, without pretending that it can be got around through "linkages" of an altogether different order of magnitude. Economic incentives and political phrase-mongering—the tools of détente—are not in the same league as nuclear arms.

The promoters of détente sought to save it by reducing it to a hard core of avoidance of nuclear warfare. They were in fact exposing its essential hollowness. They were giving it the self-same function that the cold war of unblessed memory used to have—as an alternative to hot war. They were giving détente undeserved credit for an impasse that had been brought about by the mutual destructiveness of nuclear warfare. The linkage of détente with nuclear war betrayed a misunderstanding of both.

The trouble with the narrow nuclear interpretation of détente is that it puts all the rest of the world's troubles and all the other possible forms of conflict outside détente. If détente is as schizoid as both the latest American and Soviet versions make it out to be, one must constantly ask what belongs and what does not belong to the sphere of détente. If, as the Soviet spokesman Arbatov has told us, détente belongs exclusively to the sphere of "inter-state relations" and not at all to the sphere of "social development," the question arises whether the war in the Middle East or in Angola belong to the former or the latter. In the Soviet view, the latter is decidedly the case, which tells us how broad the category of "social development" is and how narrowly détente has been confined. If, as Secretary Kissinger has told us, détente is composed of both "competition and cooperation," the question arises: What pertains to competition and what to cooperation? An even more awkward question must be asked: If cooperation is the real essence of détente, what is the nature of the competition? Isn't it the bad old "cold war"? Kissinger has also begun to talk of "moderating competition," a formula combining "accommodation and resistance."[38] Does this mean that when we get "accommodation" we have détente, and when we get "resistance" we have cold war? If we can have "accommodation and resistance" together, why not détente and cold war together? These semantic games are hopelessly muddling and contaminating all discourse on world affairs today.

How far one can go to equate détente with the avoidance of a Soviet-American nuclear war was shown by Professor Herbert Dinerstein at the 1974 Senate hearings on détente. He set out to demonstrate that "détente makes for a unique stability in the ultimate issues of war and peace, but permits, nay, encourages movement and change in all issues of lesser moment." Next, he explained that this unique stability of détente was based on the conviction that "nuclear war would be an act of mutual destruction." This line of reasoning led him to his grand climax: "Détente means that the two countries will not make war on each other."[39]

If that is all détente means, it is accomplishing exactly what the fear of "mutual destruction" was able to accomplish with or without détente. One would like to be as sure as Professor Dinerstein is that détente in this sense possesses a "unique stability." If it does, it is only because the mutual destructiveness of nuclear war possesses that same "unique stability." In any case, we have gone very far from the détente of 1972 which, according to Kissinger, had moved "on a very broad front on many issues." Those who have tried to save détente by moving it on to a very narrow front on the single issue of nuclear warfare have unwittingly been administering the last rites to it.

V

> Therefore, critics of détente must answer: what is the alternative that they propose? What precise policies do they want us to change? Are they prepared for a prolonged situation of dramatically increased international danger? Do they wish to return to the constant crises and high arms budgets of the cold war? Does détente encourage repression—or is it détente that has generated the ferment and the demands for openness that we are now witnessing?[40]

Such was the angry challenge that Secretary Kissinger hurled at critics of détente last July. He seemed to think that the answers to his questions were crushingly obvious. I, too, think that the answers were so obvious that it was a mistake to ask the questions.

1) *What is the alternative that they propose?* One alternative would be to cease and desist from the unconscionable exploitation of the word "détente," or at least to stop waving it as a banner. It has now become an obstacle to thought. It is of little or no use in relation to nuclear war. It is a mockery in relation to such wars as we have,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as in the Middle East and Angola. It admittedly does not apply to ideological conflict. It has been defined and redefined virtually out of existence. If it continues to serve as a political shibboleth, it must surely suffer the same fate as "appeasement," if it has not done so already.

2) *What precise policies do they want us to change?* One policy that was misconceived from the outset and should be changed without delay is that of "incentive" payments to the Soviet Union. It is this policy more than any other which has opened the door to appeasement in the guise of détente. Arbatov and other Soviet spokesmen have stormed against the idea that the Soviets are expected to make any "payments" to the West.[41] The theory and practice of American incentive premiums are especially ruinous in connection with nuclear-weapons negotiations. If the threat of mutual annihilation is not persuasive enough to bring one or the other side to its senses, and here I do not point an accusing finger only at the Soviet Union, immeasurably lesser incentives are at best superfluous and at worst irrelevant. Advance payments to the Soviet Union for services in the common interest that may or may not be rendered have never worked and even make matters worse. They merely serve to convince the masters of the Soviet Union that the famous "relationship of forces" has so changed in their favor that payments must be made for nothing more than a piece of paper.

3) *Are they prepared for a prolonged situation of dramatically increased danger?* Let us recall that this question was flung out with much unction and indignation only a half-year ago. Since then the level of tension and danger has increased dramatically. The question was plainly addressed to the wrong parties. The Angola crisis is hardly the work of the critics of détente. Some of them may even have seen such dramatically increased danger coming since the last Arab-Israeli war. The real question is whether the leaders and fellow-travelers of détente were prepared for a prolonged situation of dramatically increased danger.

4) *Do they wish to return to the constant crises and high arms budgets of the cold war?* To answer this question, it is useful to recall Secretary Kissinger's answer to another question put to him at the end of 1974:

> *Senator Byrd:* Is it not correct that since 1972, in a period of so-called détente, there has been a methodical improvement and expansion of nuclear and conventional power in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe?
>
> *Secretary Kissinger:* Yes, that is correct.[42]

At least we have it from Secretary Kissinger that détente, in its heyday, did nothing to discourage the Soviets from improving and expanding their military power. Whether the same can be said of the United States seems more doubtful, but let us assume that both sides have improved and expanded their nuclear and conventional power in the détente years between 1972 and 1974. It may be argued that the situation would have been worse without détente. Perhaps—but it certainly did not get better, and it is most unlikely that more intercontinental missiles and more megatonnage would have significantly changed the nature of the problem. The obvious answer, then, to this question about crises and arms budgets is: No. But what does it have to do with détente? Has détente saved us from constant crises and high arms budgets? Could Secretary Kissinger tell Senator Byrd that détente had prevailed on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe not to improve and expand their nuclear and conventional power? More to the point, the answer, unfortunately, again is: No.

5) *Does détente encourage repression—or is it détente that has generated ferment and the demands for openness that we are now witnessing?* This is the most incredible question of all. It reveals how much Kissinger's understanding of the Soviet system has changed since he took up residence in Washington. In one of his major works, *The Necessity for Choice*, published in 1961, he discussed this very question at some length. He frowned on those who thought that "Western diplomacy should seek to influence Soviet internal developments." He scoffed at "the tendency to base policy toward the USSR on an assumed change in Soviet society." He reproached those who saw "in every change of tone a change of heart." He decried "the persistence with which it has been claimed that the economic needs of the Soviet Union would impose a more conciliatory policy on it." He severely disapproved of the fact that, "whatever aspect of the Soviet system they have considered, many in the West have sought to solve our policy dilemma by making the most favorable assumptions about Soviet trends." He instructed us sagely: "The tendency to justify negotiations by changes in Soviet attitude makes us vulnerable to largely formal Soviet moves." And this: "The possibility of evolution of Soviet policy in a more conciliatory direction may be jeopardized by the eagerness with which it is predicted."[43]

NOTHING could illustrate more aptly the timeliness of these warnings than the connection between détente and Soviet repression. By the time Kissinger asked the question, "Does détente encourage repression?," in July 1975, repression was already in full swing. The most open period in recent Soviet history came in 1967-71, before the American-Soviet détente. The official crackdown on the underground *samizdat* movement took place in 1972, the very first year of that détente. The orchestrated vilification of Andrei Sakharov, the recent Nobel Peace Prize winner, started in August 1973. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn was arrested and deported in Feb-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ruary 1974. Hedrick Smith of the New York *Times* has by chance answered Kissinger's question in his new book, *The Russians,* an account of his experiences in the Soviet Union in 1971-74, dealing with precisely the years of détente, and an ideal corrective to much of what correspondents in Moscow have to send out while they are still there:

> The technology of Soviet repression had become more sophisticated and more effective as détente proceeded. The unexpected irony was that détente, instead of spawning more general ferment among the Soviet intelligentsia, as the West had hoped and the Kremlin had feared, became a reason for tighter controls and sometimes provided new techniques for quieting disaffected intellectuals.[44]

This reflex on the part of the Soviet leadership is not new. The precedent had been set by Lenin in 1920-21. At the same time that he introduced the New Economic Policy or NEP, liberalizing the Soviet economy, and as he began to make deals with Western powers, he liquidated every vestige of dissidence in both the country and the party. The two went hand in hand in order to prevent present and potential dissidents from taking advantage of "decreased tension." Stalin combined the Popular Front outside Russia with the Great Purge inside Russia. Yet Kissinger has assured us: "Changes in Soviet society have already occurred, and more will come. But they are most likely to develop through an evolution that can best go forward in an environment of decreasing international tensions."[45] The trouble with this line of reasoning is that the Soviet leadership has known what to do about it for the past fifty years. Whenever there is danger that decreasing international tensions will foster changes in Soviet society unwanted by the party, repression is increased. That is why détente has been accompanied by more rather than less repression. There may be other reasons for pursuing a policy of détente, but discouraging repression is not one of them.

One wonders why Secretary Kissinger thought that his questions were so crushing and the answers to them so self-evident. Had he forgotten so much?

VI

Secretary Kissinger, former Senator Fulbright, and others have insisted that the only alternative to détente is cold war. Since they seem to think that a return to cold war is unthinkable, or at least unbearable, that would leave us only with détente. The reality is far more confused and disagreeable. Détente, cold war, and appeasement have all been mixed up together, with appeasement given the least consideration.

One of the ways appeasement was built into détente has already been noted. The whole theory and practice of giving "incentives" to the Soviet Union to do what it should do in its own interest or not at all was the entering wedge of appeasement. We tried to buy with gratuitous and unreciprocated favors what is not for sale, especially not in the one field that is supposed to matter most in détente—nuclear warfare.

But a humiliating climate of appeasement had also been created. It was symbolized by the presidential refusal to receive Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn because the gesture might displease Leonid Brezhnev. Had Brezhnev ever refused to meet with an anti-U.S. personage in order not to displease Richard Nixon or Gerald Ford? This type of appeasement is not new and not limited to the United States. West Germany, whose détente with the Soviet Union goes back to 1970, has practiced the same kind of appeasement at the expense of one of its own foremost writers. The German incident shows that present-day appeasement takes certain characteristic forms in more than one country.

In the summer of 1973, the eminent German writer Günter Grass was invited to give a private reading from his works at the home of Ulrich Sahm, the German ambassador in Moscow. Grass made indirect contact with Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn in preparation for his visit, and Solzhenitsyn intended to give him a manuscript to take back. Meanwhile, both Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn issued statements warning against the risks of détente. This situation so frightened Ambassador Sahm that he sent a private letter to Grass withdrawing the invitation. Grass refused to let the matter remain private; he published the letter and discussed its implications on television and in the press. A former upholder of *Ostpolitik,* he now renounced it on the ground that its restrictions meant the betrayal of culture in general and Russian writers in particular. Grass was thereupon publicly and offensively rebuked by a spokesman of the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[46]

The Solzhenitsyn and Grass incidents were symptomatic of a moral flaccidity that always goes along with appeasement. The Soviets consider culture and ideology to be outside the boundaries of détente, but they seem to be the only ones to think so or to act on this premise. Indeed, cultural appeasement was also built into détente by virtue of how the different political systems work.

A well-known American specialist in Soviet studies has told how the systems work in the case of the scholarly-exchange program. The Soviet scholar who comes to the United States can see anything he asks for in American universities and libraries. He goes back and writes about America's most painful contemporary problems—ethnic conflicts, student riots, unemployment, crime, black nationalism, and the like. The American scholar has had to accept a different set of rules:

> Indeed, and the best illustration of that is the simple fact that for American scholars the most interesting subject of study in the Soviet Union

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is Soviet political history—for example Stalin and Trotsky, the history of the party, the relationship between party and government, the purges of the 1930's, Soviet foreign policy, Soviet economic policy, and so forth. We have never been able to send a single American scholar to the Soviet Union to look at any of these problems.

When the exchange visits first started there were applications on our side for the study of these areas, but the Russians resolutely refused to allow for applicants into their country. Then, realizing how applications in these fields of study would be treated by the Russians, our young scholars shifted their applications to the study of less sensitive questions, such as local government which hardly exists in the Soviet Union or 19th-century political history and problems of that kind. In others words, the Russians turned us away from the issues which are most central to us, and we are now doing their job for them, because our professors tell their young students not to bother with subjects that would prejudice their chances of being allowed into the Soviet Union. . . .

Soviet control over opportunities for study in the USSR has so influenced some of our more timid colleagues interested in going or returning to Russia, that they will not join other intellectuals in protests against the Soviet treament of dissidents, minorities, etc. and will even refuse to participate in conferences that may be distasteful to the Soviet government. The Soviet government has in fact acquired some influence both over the direction of Western scholarship and over Western political attitudes.[47]

In effect, appeasement was built into détente whenever we adapted ourselves to them but they did not adapt themselves to us. In these circumstances, appeasement worked silently, automatically, almost unthinkingly. It was the most insidious kind of appeasement because the cards were stacked in the Soviets' favor without any overt effort on their part.

Such have been the acrid fruits of détente. They did not burst forth because there was anything wrong with the ideal of détente. They flourished because too much appeasement was built into détente. Appeasement did not work in the 1930's; it has not worked in the 1970's and for the same reason—appeasement cannot appease the unappeaseable. We now have it from Secretary Kissinger that this is precisely the position we are approaching today.

The latest Kissingerian theory was foreshadowed by Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Counselor for the State Department, in an address on "The Meaning of 'Détente'" at the Naval War College in the late spring of 1975. Sonnenfeldt described the Soviet Union in terms which had not been heard previously in the era of détente:

> Its power continues to grow and its interests to expand. Indeed, it can be said that in the broad sweep of history, Soviet Russia is only just beginning its truly "imperial" phase: its military forces have acquired intercontinental reach only fairly recently; its capacity to influence events in remote areas is of relatively recent standing; and it is only just acquiring the habit of defining its interests on a global rather than a solely continental basis. For us, therefore, the problem is that of building viable relationships with an emerging world power.

One reads these lines with astonishment. "Only just beginning"? "Only fairly recently"? "Of relatively recent standing"? Unfortunately, Sonnenfeldt did not give any clue to how recent his "recently" was. The unwary reader might imagine that all this had happened during the past three years of détente. Let us take just one of these astounding statements—that the Soviet Union "is only just acquiring the habit of defining its interests on a global rather than a solely continental basis." A quarter of a century ago, North Korea could not have carried on its war if the Soviet Union had not trained and equipped its army. Continental or global? The major supplier of North Vietnam was the Soviet Union. Continental or global? In one way or another, as Communists, the Soviet leaders have defined their interests on a global basis for almost six decades. They have had much more experience in this respect than the Americans have had. This patronizing view of the Soviet Union as a global power tells more about the Counselor's historical awareness than it does about the Soviet Union.

In any case, if this is where the broad sweep of history has taken us, it should have had some bearing on the state of détente. But Sonnenfeldt was not yet ready to go that far. Instead, he gave the fact that the Soviet Union "continues to grow in power, weight, and reach" as a reason "why we must persist in the basic policies we have been pursuing over the past several years"—incentives and all.[48]

Secretary Kissinger himself went public with the new theory in an interview with Flora Lewis which appeared in the New York *Times* of December 21, 1975. He explained that the Soviet Union had become an imperial superpower in an expansionist phase that must run its course. The Soviets, he warned, will exploit every opportunity to enlarge their dominion, unless the risks are made too great for them. The Soviet move into Angola demonstrates how far afield this expansionist momentum had carried them. Unless the United States answered in kind in Angola, the next stage of Soviet expansionism would be even more dangerous and costly.

By this time the official line had clearly gone beyond the Sonnenfeldt version of early 1975. It went even further at Secretary Kissinger's news conference on December 23. It also began with a strange history lesson:

> The basic problem in our relation with the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> Soviet Union is the emergence of the Soviet Union into true superpower status. That fact has become evident only in the 1970's. As late as the Cuban missile crisis, the disparity in strategic power between the United States and the Soviet Union was overwhelmingly in our favor.

In this broad sweep of history, we jump from the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 to the 1970's. This leap makes it appear as if we had to wait until December 1975 to discover what was going on. The missile crisis convinced the Soviet leadership that it was necessary to catch up with and overtake the United States in strategic arms. The Soviets caught up much more quickly than the Americans had counted on; in fact, back in 1965, the top American leaders did not think that the Soviets had any intention of catching up. By the time the SALT I talks were started in late 1969, the Soviets had made such progress that the Americans were ready to settle for freezing both sides at a level of rough strategic parity. Despite SALT I, if we may trust Paul H. Nitze, who deserves to be heard respectfully as a SALT negotiator from 1969 to 1974, the Soviets have not been satisfied with parity and have been aiming at strategic superiority, a position which Nitze thinks they began to achieve in 1973.[49]

One cannot, therefore, jump historically all the way from 1962 to the 1970's. Something was happening within two or three years of the Cuban missile crisis that brought us to the present balance in strategic power. The shift has been going on for about a decade, and its implications have been apparent throughout the course of détente. It is rather late in the game to discover that the Soviet Union possesses "true superpower status."

And what, in the name of God, is "true superpower status"? At least as long ago as 1964, Henry Kissinger referred to the Soviet Union as a "superpower."[50] In 1968, Kissinger noted that the Soviet Union was one of the two powers which possessed "the full panoply of military might."[51] Does the new status mean that the Soviet Union in 1964 was an "untrue" superpower? Or does "true superpower" mean a "super-superpower"? How much more of the full panoply of military might, *circa* 1968, was it necessary for the Soviet Union to possess to be promoted to the rank of "true superpower"? If the United States is also a "true superpower," why the special emphasis on this new classification?

This broad sweep of history is more a political than a historical operation. The new status of the Soviet Union has been discovered just in time to explain a crisis in American détente policy, as if the crisis were a result of immanent historical forces instead of a misconceived policy. That the crisis for détente may be a mortal one was made plain by Secretary Kissinger in his December 23 news conference. These were fighting words:

> We do not confuse the relaxation of tension with permitting the Soviet Union to expand its sphere by military means and that is the issue, for example, in Angola. . . .
>
> If the Soviet Union continues action such as Angola, we will without any question resist. . . .
>
> Unless the Soviet Union shows restraint in its foreign-policy actions, the situation in our relationship is bound to become more tense, and there is no question that the United States will not accept Soviet military expansion of any kind.

Thus Kissinger has now been forced to give up in fact, if not in name, one of the underlying myths of détente—the theory that the Soviet Union had become a status-quo power. This notion was actually the implied premise of the "Basic Principles" of May 1972. It has been a costly myth, made all the worse because it was implicitly fostered by official U.S. policy.

THIS IS not the place to discuss at length what the U.S. should do in Angola, a large and difficult subject by itself. I wish to restrict myself to the implications of the Angolan crisis for détente. The first thing that needs to be said, in my view, is that the Angolan situation represents two problems—one immediate and tactical, the other long-range and strategic. It is necessary to differentiate between them, for what may be good in the long run need not be good in the short run. Angola may not be the best place for the United States to face the issue tactically; it is the right place to understand the issue strategically. On the tactical level, the United States need not permit the Soviet Union to decide the time and place of every confrontation of this kind.

As I write, it is too early to tell what the full story of Angola is. Whatever the truth may be about the various foreign interventions, the Soviets clearly outbid all the others by bringing in thousands of Cuban proxies, the nearest thing to using their own troops, and by arming their side with far more, far more costly, and far more advanced weapons. In terms of the political significance of the Angolan situation for détente, however, it matters less what each side has done than that such a faraway Soviet-American contest should have taken place at all. For if, as Secretary Kissinger has maintained, the United States must react as strongly as he has urged it to react in Angola in order to discourage the Soviet Union "from taking advantage" of favorable opportunities, we are faced with the paradox that it is necessary to wage cold and not-so-cold war in dangerous situations in order to save détente for non-dangerous situations—in short, that détente works when and where it is needed the least. If détente is so restricted, fluctuating, ambiguous, and paradoxical, it can hardly be taken as seriously as we had been led to believe.

Tactics aside, Kissinger is finally right on the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

strategic problem: the Soviet Union *is* in an imperial, expansionist phase. We are faced strategically with a long-term Soviet imperial pressure, now gathering momentum and based, as Soviet spokesmen like to say, on a "new relationship of forces." If the Soviets can get the world to accept their version of this "new relationship of forces," the consequences will be cumulatively disastrous.

This renewed Soviet pressure was building up while the United States was beguiled by détente. It is imprudent and implausible to conduct a foreign policy based on holding back the new Soviet expansionism while still officially enmeshed in the doctrine of détente. The new and the old theories and policies cannot coexist peacefully. One of them must go.

Notes

[1] *Détente*: Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, August-September 1974, pp. 61, 67, 102, 147, 208, 239, 301.

[2] Walter C. Clemens, Jr., "The Impact of Détente on Chinese and Soviet Communism," *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 28, No. 2, 1974, p. 134.

[3] "If tensions mount, the parties may move toward cold and then hot war. If tensions diminish, the parties move toward détente (whether short- or long-lived); from détente they could move further toward rapprochement or even entente" (*ibid.*).

[4] May 29, 1972.

[5] July 3, 1974.

[6] *Détente*: Hearings, pp. 161-62.

[7] Robert Ellsworth, *Department of State Bulletin*, November 23, 1970, pp. 642-43. Also: "The condition of the Soviet economy is clearly the primary determinant of present Soviet foreign policy" (Marshall Shulman, *Foreign Affairs*, October 1973, p. 43).

[8] *Détente*: Hearings, p. 32.

[9] *Emigration Amendment to the Trade Reform Act of 1974*: Hearings before the Committee on Finance, U.S. Senate, December 3, 1974, p. 106.

[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 96-97.

[11] Marshall Shulman, New York *Times*, March 10, 1974.

[11a] Marshall I. Goldman, *Détente and Dollars* (Basic Books, 1975), pp. 275-76.

[12] Marshall I. Goldman, *Daedalus*, Fall 1975, p. 137, and Note 35, p. 143.

[13] June 15, 1972.

[14] *U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: A New Strategy for Peace*, A Report to the Congress by Richard Nixon, President of the United States, February 18, 1970, p. 232.

[15] *Nomination of Henry A. Kissinger*: Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate, September 11, 1973, Part I, p. 101.

[16] *Pravda*, August 1, 1975, p. 1 (in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XXVII, No. 31, p. 13).

[17] *Emigration Amendment to the Trade Reform Act of 1974*, p. 77.

[18] September 19, 1974.

[19] *Information Bulletin*, issued by the *World Marxist Review*, Vol. 13 (1975), Nos. 12-13, p. 14.

[20] *Izvestia*, September 4, 1975 (in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XXVII, No. 36, p. 3).

[21] *World Marxist Review*, September 1975, p. 59.

[22] N. Polyanov, *Izvestia*, November 29, 1975, p. 4.

[23] V. Kobysh, *Izvestia*, November 30, 1975, p. 2.

[24] V. Matveyev, *Izvestia*, December 2, 1975, p. 4.

[25] Oleg Skalkin, *Pravda*, December 6, 1975, p. 5.

[26] O. Kitsenko, I. Shchedrov, A. Arkhipov, *Pravda*, December 8, 1975, p. 3.

[27] K. Zaradov, *Pravda*, August 6, 1975 (in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. XXVII, No. 31, pp. 15, 17).

[28] Gus Hall, *The Crisis of U.S. Capitalism and the Fight Back* (International Publishers, 1975), p. 44.

[29] *Political Affairs*, November 1975, pp. 3, 6, 16.

[30] *Emigration Amendment to the Trade Reform Act of 1974*, p. 89.

[31] March 28, 1974.

[32] Henry A. Kissinger, interview with William F. Buckley, September 13, 1975.

[33] November 12, 1973 (interview in Peking).

[34] *Congressional Record*, Senate, November 9, 1973, p. S-20136.

[35] New York *Times*, March 10, 1974.

[36] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Common Defense* (Columbia University Press, 1961), p. 88. In 1950, U.S. policymakers had expected the second stage to be reached in 1954 (p. 60). But even if Huntington is right, and it did not come about for another two years or so, the difference is hardly significant now.

[37] July 3, 1974.

[38] Flora Lewis, New York *Times*, December 21, 1975.

[39] *Détente*: Hearings, pp. 301-302.

[40] July 15, 1975.

[41] Arbatov and Polyanov, *op. cit.*

[42] *Emigration Amendment to the Trade Reform Act of 1974*, p. 76.

[43] Henry A. Kissinger, *The Necessity for Choice* (Harper & Row, 1961), pp. 195-201.

[44] Hedrick Smith, *The Russians* (Quadrangle, 1976), p. 439.

[45] September 19, 1974.

[46] The story is told by François Bondy, *Survey*, Spring-Summer 1974, p. 43.

[47] Robert F. Byrnes, Distinguished Professor of History and Director of the Russian and East European Institute, Indiana State University, *Survey*, Autumn 1974, pp. 52-53.

[48] *Naval War College Review*, Summer 1975, pp. 3-8.

[49] *Foreign Affairs*, January 1976, p. 226.

[50] *Ibid.*, July 1964, p. 539.

[51] *Agenda for the Nation* (Brookings Institution, 1968), p. 587.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

China, the U.S. & Soviet Expansionism

Robert S. Elegant

CHINA's highly idiosyncratic view of the world is epitomized—even if not wholly clarified—by a quip making the rounds of the underemployed Peking diplomatic community after two American state visits in a period of less than two months. "Of course," they say over their cocktails, "there are major differences between the Americans and the Chinese. Gerald Ford and Henry Kissinger feel the fall of South Vietnam was disastrous. The Chinese *know* it was catastrophic."

To anyone except those diplomats and the small group of men and women elsewhere who have been condemned to near-obsession with the People's Republic of China because of linguistic proficiency or other defects, the Chinese reaction to the total failure of the American enterprise in South Vietnam must appear heavily paradoxical. Everyone knows that the Chinese were for decades the standard-bearers of "people's wars of liberation," the movement presumably typified by Hanoi's fight against Saigon. Non-specialists may not know that the Chinese consistently described that struggle as the "focus of the worldwide liberation movement," or that Peking predicted confidently more than fifteen years ago that a Communist victory in Vietnam would "force imperialism back to its lair," precipitate the "inevitable collapse" of the capitalist world, and insure the "victory of socialism." But most non-specialists certainly believed that the Communist Chinese were sincerely cheering for a victory by the Communist Vietnamese. Yet far from celebrating since the cruellest April of all Aprils encompassed the collapse of the Saigon regime and threw American foreign policy into disarray, the Chinese have on the contrary intensified their efforts to bolster the resolution of the hated "capitalist exploiters."

Thus Peking has been laboring mightily to shore up the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and to accelerate the unlikely transformation of the European Economic Community into a true supranational community, rather than a conglomeration of intermittently antipathetic nation-states. Peking has further striven to impress upon Japan the acute danger to its national existence posed by the Russians—Japan, which emerged as a power by destroying the imperial Russian fleet in the Straits of Tsushima in 1905 and, thereafter, clashed regularly with the forces of Muscovy, whatever the color of their banners, until the folly of the Great War in the Pacific. Peking has, *mirabile dictu*, actually been trying to breathe life into the moribund Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, which officially pronounced itself dead a few months ago. Above all, Peking has sought by various inducements to encourage a powerful American military presence in both Asia and Europe. All those actions of the quondam champion of world revolution on behalf of the status quo were either intensified or initiated by the Vietnam debacle.

After even brief consideration, the reason for the superficially paradoxical and unmistakably frenetic activity of the People's Republic of China is readily apparent. The Soviet Union benefited even more substantially from Hanoi's victory, won with Soviet arms, than even the blackest pessimists had feared. Moscow increased its power in Southeast Asia manyfold—and Moscow is Peking's *bête noire*, while Southeast Asia is Peking's backyard.

Peking itself lies only thirty-five miles from the Great Wall of China, a stupendously long and surprisingly low fortification cobbled together in the 3rd century before the birth of Christ by China's first emperor, who linked the many shorter walls feudal princes had built in the preceding centuries to keep out the marauding barbarians of the northern steppes. Despite the Great Wall, the Chinese fought a running battle for more than two thousand years with these nomadic warriors, winning most battles, but losing almost as many and, often, surrendering the northern tier of China itself to the barbarians' sway. Twice, powerful barbarian forces swept over all China and established their own dynasties—one relatively short-lived, the other enduring for more than two-and-a-half centuries.

Since conquerors from the north have absorbed China, the national memory of the Chinese counsels a prudent concern with the activities of any heavily armed, militant group north of the Great Wall. Today that group is not merely a congeries of tribes in arms like the Huns and the Mongols,

ROBERT S. ELEGANT, here making his first appearance in these pages, is Hong Kong correspondent for the Los Angeles *Times*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but the second most powerful nation in the world. The Soviet Union is, moreover, a nation inclined to expansionism by its history, its present ideology, and its domestic defects, both political and economic. And that nation has displayed an unseemly interest in internal Chinese affairs, an intrusiveness fully understood by a Chinese regime that came to power with the assistance of Moscow.

For both tactical and semantic reasons, the Chinese are stridently alerting other nations to the threat Soviet expansionism poses to their existence. The Peking administration cites with wry relish two apposite maxims from the vast storehouse of Chinese epigrams accumulated over the centuries: "[The Soviets are making] a feint to the East, and an attack on the West," and "Do not be distracted by the [American] wolf at the front door from the [Soviet] tiger at the back door."

But a senior official proposes that the proverb be recast to warn: "Beware of the bear—the polar bear!"

A clerk in a Peking curio shop explains the purpose of a painted earthenware cylinder with a large round spout protruding from its side. It is a replica of a Han Dynasty (207 B.C.E.-220 C.E.) early-warning system. An officer would place the cylinder on the ground and his ear to the spout to magnify the hoofbeats of a distant enemy, the better to estimate the enemy's strength and mark his position.

Two millennia later, China possesses more effective early-warning systems. But the magnitude of the threat has also been enlarged by technology. Moreover, the enemy is *not* coming only from the north and the northwest, as he did when the Great Wall was China's main line of resistance. The enemy of today has established major footholds in Vietnam and Laos on China's southern borders. He is also implacably drawing a ring of steel ships around China by his campaign to dominate the oceans. The Chinese fear that Soviet use of the spacious, American-built naval and air facilities at Camranh Bay, from which the Czarist fleet sailed for its fatal rendezvous with Admiral Togo in the Tsushima Straits, will virtually close the ring. The Soviets already possess a major base in their closed city of Vladivostock, and they are pressing North Korea to grant them base rights, as the Chinese did, to their great regret, at Port Arthur and Dairen in the 1950's. The two arms of the pincer are drawing closer.

Peking is not primarily concerned about a formal agreement between the Vietnamese and the Soviets. Singapore is not an American base as such, but the U.S. Seventh Fleet uses the small island republic's facilities for repairs, recreation, and resupply. Similar concessions to the Soviets at Camranh Bay are merely a matter of time—if they have not already been granted. Haunted by the specter of encirclement, the Chinese are by no means content to rely upon the Seventh Fleet as an adequate deterrent to Soviet naval ambitions in Far Eastern, Southeast Asian, and South Asian waters. They view with dismay shrinking American capability and declining American resolution.

THE prudent counsels of the national memory, the apprehensive perception of Soviet intentions, and the fear of isolation—all were galvanized by two events in the first half of 1975: the fall of Vietnam on April 30 largely because of American acts of omission; and the reopening of the Suez Canal on June 5 by an act of American purpose. The Chinese were, of course, aware of the long planned reopening of the Canal, which has already doubled or quadrupled Soviet naval capability in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. But Peking did not anticipate the abrupt disintegration of the Republic of Vietnam when the corrupt inefficiency of the regime of President Nguyen Van Thieu reached critical mass and American military supplies to Saigon's armed forces were sharply reduced by the United States Congress, the same agency that had removed the greatest factor restraining Hanoi, fear of American retaliation.

Peking could hardly have anticipated the immediate debacle and its consequences when even a professional alarmist like General George S. Brown, Chief of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, wrote with complacency only a month or so earlier: "The probability of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam's causing the Republic of Vietnam's collapse through political and clandestine warfare is decreasing. . . ." In his presentations to the Congress regarding the military budget, General Brown did note "the North Vietnamese constant attacks, steady buildup of war materials in the south, and generally increasing offensive. . . ." He further warned: "The alternative to sufficient military and economic aid is the *eventual* collapse of the Republic of Vietnam" (emphasis added). But no one publicly anticipated the full-scale, conventional offensive mounted by Hanoi that precipitated the *immediate* collapse of the morally and materially depleted Republic of Vietnam. Nor, it appears, did even the hypersensitive Chinese appreciate the full extent of Soviet supplies of arms and Soviet moral encouragement that enabled Hanoi to mount its offensive and arrive at a final solution of the Vietnam problem.

The Chinese now aver that they did, indeed, expect Saigon to crumble abruptly. But at the time, they expressed shocked surprise at the sudden fall of the nation which had ironically become a major element in China's strategy to limit the expansion of Soviet influence and the extension of Soviet military power. Despite their constant warnings regarding Soviet intentions, it further appears that the Chinese had not fully appreciated how immediately and comprehensively the Soviets would benefit from the major American defeat. Even pessimists in Peking could hardly have expected that the Russians would, almost instanta-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

neously, freeze them out of all but a small corner of Laos. They could not have anticipated that Soviet influence would become so predominant in Hanoi that the Chinese voice is unheeded in any important respect; the Democratic Republic of Vietnam has aligned itself with the USSR on every major international issue, a cheap but important payoff; the Hanoi-Moscow axis is addressing itself to the extension of its joint offensive throughout Southeast Asia; and Peking-Hanoi relations have deteriorated so radically that the Chinese recently warned the Vietnamese they would risk war if they interfered with Chinese occupation of a scattering of islets off the Vietnamese coast in the South China Sea.

If the Chinese were, at best, complacent in their dependence on American resolution or, at worst, deafened by their own rhetoric to the consequences of the "liberation" of South Vietnam, they have been vigorously attempting to repair their errors since the debacle. Despite their ritual denunciations of American imperialism and their recurring public demands that the U.S. withdraw its forces from South Korea, the Chinese have clearly signaled that they want a continuing American military presence in Asia—and Europe as well. In recent years, every visiting foreign minister, premier, or president whose country possesses military ties with the U.S. has been urged to maintain those ties. The list includes such diverse nations as Japan, France, Britain, Thailand, Germany, and the Philippines. After the briefest ceremonial bow to the convention that they are seeking American withdrawal from overseas bases, senior Chinese officials acknowledge their concern that the U.S. will withdraw precipitately. They are, today, far less confident that "aggressive American imperialism" will maintain the strong posture they so ardently desire than they were before the fall of South Vietnam. The Chinese are disturbed not only by the increasing isolationist sentiment of the United States Congress; they fear that Secretary of State Henry Kissinger may be so infatuated personally with maintaining détente that he will go to dangerous extremes to placate the Soviet Union.

The Chinese are not notably reassured by their knowledge that Kissinger himself considers détente not an ideal policy, but the only possible policy. They are not cheered by the fact that Kissinger, unlike some enthusiasts, does not look upon détente as a total reconciliation leading to warm friendship between the U.S. and the USSR, but a minimal agreement between hostile powers to avoid the use of force. Because of their particular frame of reference, the Chinese have difficulties in comprehending Kissinger's understanding of détente. The Secretary's precise position is an even greater conundrum to them than it is to Western observers because they are more concerned with Kissinger's actions than his words, and they discern in his actions an overcommitment to a policy they feel has already failed. A nation of born showmen, the Chinese also exaggerate grandly for effect.

The world is therefore treated to the deliciously incongruous spectacle of Chinese revolutionaries chiding the American Metternich for failing to maintain the status quo, and for erring in both his assessment of the Soviets and his actions toward them. If Soviet-American relations were rolling merrily along the tracks, the Chinese might be less condemnatory and aggressive. Their purpose, after all, is not to exasperate the Americans to the point where Washington feels it cannot do business with Peking and, therefore, draws closer to Moscow. Their purpose is to divide the two superpowers—by exacerbating existing difficulties and differences.

The Chinese attitude is, therefore, unquestionably overstated. Peking has indulged in grandiose histrionics to dramatize its fears that the U.S. may be an unreliable ally. These tactics have, at the least, provoked Kissinger into public declarations that the U.S. will continue to resist "hegemonism," Peking's word of art for Soviet expansionism. They have also elicited from the President of the United States the six-point formula he called the New Pacific Doctrine reaffirming those American "commitments" to Asia—military, political, and economic—which the Chinese consider an absolute necessity to counteract Soviet expansionism there. But eliciting such declarations is no great achievement. American policy-planners do not, after all, consider the Soviet Union a thoroughly reformed character that has cast aside its ambitions to exercise predominant influence throughout the world.

The constant shifting of positions, as well as the interplay between divergent schools of unofficial thought in the United States, is confusing to the Chinese. What the Chinese do not understand is that public differences between the Department of State and the Department of Defense arise naturally from the different missions of those two major branches of the federal government. The State Department is, by its nature, directed toward keeping the peace and limiting Soviet expansionism through negotiations and the delicate balancing of many forces. The Pentagon is charged to keep the peace and thwart Soviet expansionism by armed force and the threat of armed force. The two departments' analyses and policy recommendations are, therefore, bound to diverge, even when they start from a reasonably similar appreciation of the fundamental situation. In practice, that means the State Department is prepared to take risks and make concessions the Pentagon considers, at best, ill-advised and, at worst, hazardous. Nonetheless, their fundamental assessment of Soviet intentions is much the same—except, of course, where commitment to certain policies subsequently impels the two departments to adjust

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their assessments in order to justify their policies.

ALLOWING for the distortions produced by virtually total conformity on the one hand and near anarchy on the other, we can read fairly clearly the essential differences between Peking and Washington on both the assessment of Soviet intentions and the methods necessary to deal with the Soviet threat. The Chinese discern an implacable dedication to expanding Moscow's power to the utmost limits, which are, presumably, predominant influence throughout the world. The Americans, by and large, believe, in the first place, that the Soviet Union, whatever its purposes, is as susceptible of diversion by outside influences, random or deliberate, as any other nation and, in the second, that the evolution of Soviet society will effect significant changes in Soviet actions abroad.

Evidence for either view is readily available. Joseph Stalin died in 1953, and the slow evolution of Soviet society away from absolutist repression began. Moreover, Moscow has dispatched no expeditionary forces; no Soviet troops have, as far as outsiders know, been committed to combat outside Eastern Europe. But two changes of regime since Stalin's death have not halted Soviet expansionism. Moreover, the American Joint Chiefs of Staff have noted that the Soviet Union is "pressing forward vigorously with massive programs for near-term deployments involving every facet of *offensive* strategic power" (emphasis added).

The Chinese are obviously more at home with the Pentagon view than with the more complex assessments of the Soviet threat that originate in the State Department. Peking and Washington's divergent views on coping with that threat can be described with reasonable simplicity. Washington believes that a combination of pressure, backed by military deterrents, and cajoling, sweetened with economic lagniappe, can contain Soviet ambitions. Peking believes that only constant confrontation on all fronts can halt the Soviets and avert war. Kissinger is seeking "equilibrium," a dynamic balance of power, and he is willing to make substantial concessions to the Russians to preserve that state. His quarrel with dismissed Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, who has all the sympathy of the Chinese, primarily concerned the extent to which the U.S. could go in such continuing "trade-offs." First Vice Premier Teng Hsiao-ping, the *de facto* head of government, wants to face the Soviets down. His position is more straightforward, in good part because he possesses neither the military power to prevent Moscow's expansion nor the material resources to strike deals with the Soviets.

Exasperated American officials sometimes complain that the Chinese approach to Russo-American relations is simply, "Let's you and him fight." The Chinese deny that they want, as their old saying has it, to "Sit on the mountainside and watch two tigers maul each other." To charge the Chinese with wishing for the delights of a *tertium gaudens* is not totally unjustified, but it is a bit unfair.

The present Chinese leadership is aware that no one—including China—would benefit from nuclear war between the superpowers. China has begun to acquire an economic stake in the future and has, simultaneously, lost much of its earlier enthusiasm for a global conflict that would, like its two predecessors in this century, "greatly advance the socialist cause." A conventional war might be more attractive to Peking. Still, the Chinese are also aware that such a Russo-American clash could escalate into nuclear conflict and would, besides, devastate any major theater of operations the antagonists considered worth the struggle. The Chinese think primarily of Western Europe, whose emergence as an alternate center of world power they envision. Peking not only cherishes that particular illusion, but is working as diligently as its limited resources allow to further its realization.

Besides, the Chinese are enjoying the wry satisfaction of watching their warnings become reality. Events since the Helsinki Conference on European Security, even more than events prior to that mass summit meeting, have demonstrated that the Chinese view of the Soviets and their intentions is closer to reality than the American view—as may well be the Chinese prescription for dealing with the Soviets.

Having secured the imprimatur of the West to present frontiers in Europe, the Soviets have begun to act more like themselves. They have not only stalled further progress in the SALT talks, but have displayed a generalized surliness that recalls, however faintly, the era of Stalin himself. Both the French and West German Presidents have been given chilly receptions in Moscow, while the promised reduction of barriers to the free exchange of men and ideas between Eastern Europe and the outside world is notable for its non-realization. The barricades have neither come down nor, even, been lowered slightly.

Granting Western correspondents in Moscow multiple entry and exit visas is a ridiculously low price to pay for the legitimation—almost beatification—of the illiberal regimes of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Compared to the inevitable softening of Western European resolution, the area's new vulnerability to Soviet psychological offensives, and the broad encouragement of subversion compounded at Helsinki, those visas, which can be cancelled at any time, are no price at all. Yet the Soviets have delivered very little else, despite their pious professions at the conference. They have hardly troubled to conceal either their satisfaction at having hoodwinked the West or their contempt of the West for having been so easily hoodwinked.

The Chinese are, of course, deeply concerned

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with such immediate events, though their chief concern is the long run. They reacted with profuse indignation to the Soviets' introduction of modern arms and "advisers" into Angola to supplement Cuban units supporting the Moscow-oriented Marxist Popular Movement against its rivals. If those advisers are compelled to fight, even in self-defense, it will be the first time that Soviet units have fought outside Soviet territory since the suppression of the Hungarian revolt of 1956—and the first time they have fought in a territory not geographically contiguous with the Soviet Union. The Soviet role in Angola cannot be described as defensive by the most liberal interpretation of Soviet interests. The relatively bloodless Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968 alarmed the Chinese because they saw that the Brezhnev Doctrine, justifying such invasions to "safeguard socialism," could equally be applied to themselves. But, at least, Hungary and Czechoslovakia lay well within Moscow's latter-day empire. Besides, the Chinese might conceivably act in much the same way if their own direct interests were threatened on their own borders.

But the Angola adventure can only be interpreted as an extreme example of far-reaching Soviet offensive designs. The factional struggle in the Portuguese colony so abruptly pitched into independence lacks even the partial justification for Soviet intervention inherent in the complexity of the seemingly irreconcilable clash in the Middle East. There the Soviets, disappointed in their Egyptian protégés, have signed a fifteen-year treaty of mutual defense with Syria and, reportedly, stationed a squadron of Mig-25's of the Soviet air force in that country. But the Middle East, unlike Angola, is, in the first place, a cockpit of great-power and lesser-power confrontation and, in the second, an area of direct Soviet interest close to Soviet borders.

As the Chinese see it, the basic text of Soviet foreign policy was expressed by Andrei Gromyko at the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union: "There is not a single question of any importance in the international arena that could at present be solved *without* the Soviet Union or *against its will*" (emphasis added). Even John Foster Dulles at the height of his hubris was not more positive or more assertive.

TODAY, the chief instrument of the Soviet worldwide power is the Soviet navy, which has expanded geometrically since 1964. Only sea power can extend Russia's reach throughout the world. The acquisition of overseas bases amplifies that power, which, in turn, makes necessary the acquisition of additional bases in the ever-rising spiral. The Chinese know that the Soviets have carefully read the original apostle of expansionism through sea power, Alfred Thayer Mahan, for Moscow's policies during the past decade bear the unmistakable mark of the man who wrote in 1899: "Sea power is . . . the handmaid of expansion, its begetter and preserver. . . ." In mid-1974, the Soviet Union, for the first time, exceeded the United States in the number of major operational surface warships.

In mid-1975, the Soviet Union possessed approximately 220 such craft, while the U.S. navy had only 180. Moreover, the Soviet warships are, by and large, newer and more advanced in design than the American ships. Playing the numbers game can be misleading, since types of ships and their missions vary so widely. One man's major operational surface warship is another man's auxiliary. But there is a more relevant guideline.

Most significantly, the Soviet Union committed itself in the late 1960's to a program of aircraft-carrier construction. That commitment evidenced a major strategic decision that necessitated a substantial reallotment of Soviet resources. Building aircraft carriers required the development of an entire new technology and the allocation of at least $10 billion, by American standards and estimates, for ships, hardware, aircraft, and training. Yet the USSR is, essentially, a land power; Moscow is dependent upon far-ranging naval forces and, above all, naval air power for defense of neither its territory nor its commerce.

When the 35,000-ton *Kiev* joins the Soviet fleet in 1976, Moscow's power will acquire an entirely new cast—and two more *Kiev*-class carriers are under construction, each capable of mothering either 35 short-take-off-and-landing aircraft or 35 offensive, troop-carrying helicopters—or a mixture of the two. The carriers will give the Soviets a capability for amphibious operations and controlling seaborne commerce they previously lacked. Their chief purpose must, logically, be extension of Soviet power to areas like the African littoral, the Indian Ocean, the South China Sea, and Far Eastern waters. The Soviets cannot yet challenge American ship- and land-based air power in the Atlantic or the broad reaches of the Pacific, while they do not require seaborne warplanes in the Mediterranean or the Baltic. Tactically identical, Soviet aircraft carriers are different in strategic purpose from American carriers, whatever the intent behind their construction. The U.S., which *is* dependent on the sea lanes for its commerce and security, in any event already possessed a large aircraft-carrier force when the cold war began. Having long enjoyed command of the seas, the U.S. navy is now directly challenged by the Soviets.

It would, therefore, most strongly appear that the Chinese are correct. Détente may be a devious, hazardous road to rapprochement for the United States. For the Soviets it is a way of spinning out a period of apparent peace while building up formidable offensive forces and acquiring a worldwide network of distant bases. Already markedly superior to the U.S. and its allies in conventional land and air forces, the Soviets are now making a play for control of the oceans.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The possession of preponderant power at sea, as Mahan pointed out, makes it unnecessary to use that power. If Soviet naval strength, backed by a vast fishing fleet and an expanding merchant marine, continues to expand, while U.S. sea power continues to decline, the Soviets will have won the battle by default. No force need be used, just the tremendous advantages—psychological, economic, and political—that derive from a commanding naval posture. If, for example, Japan knew that the Soviets could cut off its oil from the Persian Gulf at will, it would be forced to placate Moscow by all means at its disposal. And intimidating Japan is just one of numerous examples of the potency of sea power, which the Soviets, on their past record, will not hesitate to use.

The prospect of Soviet control of the seas is particularly painful to Peking just when the People's Republic of China is breaking out of its former isolation to essay a major role in the world's commercial and diplomatic affairs. Soviet sea power could thwart or even block China's new outward reaching. It could obviously hamper China's economic development. Though committed to "self-reliance" (in Chinese, *tze-li, keng-sheng*, literally, ever more vigorous through our own strength), China is importing large quantities of foreign technology, including entire steel, plastics, and fertilizer plants. Peking plans to pay for those imports by exporting the yield of the large new oil fields it is now developing. If Chinese ships or ships sailing to and from China were subject to harassment, China's economic growth could be slowed significantly.

THOSE fears are, of course, long-range and, in part, speculative. For the short run, the Chinese are striving to retain an effective American military, economic, and political presence in Asia and Europe to balance and deter Soviet expansionism. In the long run, China's doctrine holds, the Americans will go under, relinquishing their worldwide power bit by bit to a resurgent Soviet Union. At the level of practical experience, American behavior impels the Chinese to the same conclusion. Peking will therefore not place great reliance upon the U.S. in the long run. Instead, the Chinese are seeking to foster an entirely new structure of economic and military power throughout the world. The enterprise is undeniably visionary. It is also highly audacious. But it is the only viable alternative the Chinese see to conceding world domination to the Soviet Union—and resigning themselves to Soviet overlordship. Their campaign, conducted with the fervor of a crusade, marches under the banner of "anti-hegemonism."

The word is important in itself. The Chinese charge that the Soviet Union is seeking to "exercise hegemony" over the entire world. The Chinese word is *pa-chüan*, which literally means tyrannical power immorally attained and oppressively exercised. Even before Confucius, who lived in the 6th century before Christ, Chinese political thinkers drew a sharp distinction between *wang-tao*, the way of the legitimate king, who sought the good of his people, and *pa-tao*, the way of the usurper-tyrant, who exploited and oppressed the people. Resisting hegemony, *pa-chüan*, the rule of a tyrant, means not only preventing the imposition of oppressive, illicit authority, but, implicitly, taking the path of virtue.

That rationale is directly linked with another Chinese preoccupation that originated in antiquity. All Chinese regimes have striven to create *Ta Tung*, the Great Commonwealth of all peoples under Chinese inspiration and guidance. China, after all, was *Tien-hsia*, "all that lies under Heaven," and the Chinese for millennia acknowledged the existence of no equal civilization, much less a civilization superior to their own in any respect. The grand design of creating a new international order characterized by universal social justice and guided by Chinese example is certainly visionary. But it is by no means as fantastic or presumptuous as it may at first reading appear, since, aside from the Soviets, the Chinese are the only ones who actually know precisely what they seek in a world where indecision, rather than certainty of purpose, prevails.

Resisting hegemonism in order to lay the foundations for a new utopia may appear far-fetched. But one must, after all, begin somewhere.

The Chinese are beginning by attempting to create a consensus among divergent nations that Soviet ambitions threaten all and must, therefore, be withstood by all possible means. The Chinese have, moreover, pondered their grand design thoroughly and determined that it could best be realized by concomitant military and economic measures that lead in time to a completely new social order. Those visionary aspects should, however, not detract from serious consideration of the immediate, practical purposes Chinese foreign policy is presently pursuing.

Peking's strategists divide the world into zones: the "true socialist" zone that, at present, includes only China and its minuscule European ally, Albania; the two superpowers, the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, both "contending and, simultaneously, colluding to attain supreme power . . . though the Soviets are far more dangerous and their actions most likely to provoke war"; the developed world of Western Europe, Japan, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand; the underdeveloped nations of Africa, Asia, and Latin America; and, finally, in a kind of limbo, the tributaries of the Soviet Union, including not only Eastern Europe, but Vietnam, North Korea, Cuba, and Outer Mongolia. Peking is, at the moment, chiefly concerned about Western Europe, Japan, and the underdeveloped nations. But it gives particular attention to the nations of Southeast Asia, China's neighbors and natural

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

commercial sphere, which are directly threatened by the Moscow-Hanoi axis; and Japan, the highly industrialized and highly vulnerable nation only 550 miles off China's shores, with which the Chinese have maintained a literal love-hate relationship for centuries.

The first move toward creating the new order is building a new structure of security amid the post-Vietnam confusion, and the cornerstone of that structure is avowed determination to resist hegemony. Peking has already secured declarations of such determination from all the former members of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization except Great Britain, which will probably take the pledge in the near future. The list now comprises: the United States, France, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand, and Pakistan. Peking has also won adherence from Malaysia and Burma. Among non-Communist Asian nations, only Singapore and Indonesia, each reluctant for its own reasons to draw too close to China, have not taken the pledge.

None of the old or new Communist-dominated countries of Asia has been invited to subscribe to the anti-hegemony pledge. Peking knows that they could not do so without severely imperiling—perhaps destroying—their relations with the Soviet Union. The effort to secure their adherence is, at this moment, not yet worth the effort. India and Bangladesh are also outside the pale, in large part because their relations with China are troubled. The net effect has been to bind Peking, however loosely, to precisely those nations of Southeast Asia that formerly adhered to an avowedly anti-Communist alliance or fought their own internal Communist insurgencies. Communist China has thus become the doyenne of an avowedly anti-Soviet grouping, which is also inherently anti-Communist, whatever that word may mean amid the present ideological confusion of nations.

The confusion is compounded because a number of those nations, notably Malaysia, Burma, and Thailand, are troubled by resurgent Communist guerrilla movements, which, in theory at least, derive their inspiration from Peking. In the short run, Peking can blame Thailand's problems on the Moscow-Hanoi axis, operating through Laos, while keeping its options open by tacit encouragement of the ethnic Chinese guerrillas of Malaysia. But that expedient will only work for a while. In time, China will be forced to a choice between guerrillas and established government, a choice that will, presumably, be primarily determined by success or failure in building the anti-hegemonistic bloc.

The importance Peking assigns to the declaration of determination to resist hegemony is demonstrated by China's present posture toward Japan. Prime Minister Kikuei Tanaka gladly subscribed to the anti-hegemonism pledge when he visited China and issued a joint communiqué modeled on the Nixon pattern in late 1972. China is now pressing Prime Minister Takeo Miki to include a declaration of mutual determination to resist hegemony in the preamble of a long-delayed Sino-Japanese treaty formally ending the state of war between those two countries that began in 1937. Miki is, therefore, presented with the choice of formally alienating the Soviets, who have stated their strong objections to the proposed clause, or alienating the Chinese. And the Chinese are adamant. No anti-hegemony clause, no treaty, they say.

Beyond question, the Chinese envision a new military alliance in Asia that will, in time, link itself to other right-minded nations and groups of nations elsewhere in the world. All are, according to the Chinese analysis, threatened by Soviet ambitions. For the time being, the Asian alliance would be backed by the United States, the only nation that possesses the military and economic power to support such a grandiose project. The fact that the new alliance was locally generated and sustained should, Peking apparently reckons, be a strong inducement to the United States, whose interests already dictate such support. Initially, at least, it excludes Vietnam and North Korea, in the hope of isolating those Soviet-inclined regimes. Unlike SEATO, it would not be an alien creation. Unlike South Vietnam, it would base its resistance upon deep-rooted convictions of nationhood and common interests. Those factors would, further, make strong American support less critical in time.

Once the nucleus had been firmly established, the Asian Anti-Hegemony Group (or whatever it would be called) would seek ties with similar groups elsewhere. The adherence of a number of Western European countries to the anti-hegemonism pledge should, presumably, facilitate such links. China is also wooing all nations that have grievances against the Soviet Union. West Germany is cheered, if not overly impressed, by Peking's declarations in favor of German reunification. Uganda was honored by an invitation from Chairman Mao Tse-tung himself to President Idi Amin to visit China after his break with the Soviets. Like Winston Churchill when he was fighting Hitler, the Chinese will make friends with anyone who opposes their enemy, the Soviet Union.

The military alliance would be sustained by a new economic grouping, an Asian mini-Common Market, that would, in time, seek close association with the European Economic Community, as well as Third World nations. China's unofficial spokesmen in Hong Kong, the Peking-controlled Chinese-language press, have already flown a trial balloon by calling for a regional association "in order to advance the economic cooperation of the Southeast Asian nations and protect their economic rights and interests." The Hong Kong newspapers have proposed not only a lowering of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tariff barriers and supranational cooperation after the model of the European Common Market, but also commodity embargoes and price-fixing after the OPEC model. China itself occupies a potentially powerful position because it can confidently anticipate greatly increased oil exports.

If Tokyo could be brought into the envisioned economic association, its success would be assured. The economic power of Japan is a major force not only in Asia, but throughout the world. Yet Japan is also dependent upon Southeast Asian markets and raw materials. A perfect symbiosis could, presumably, be created.

Peking feels that the military-economic association, based upon the principle of anti-hegemonism, would inevitably attract other nations outside Asia that feel themselves threatened by the Soviet Union or exploited by either of the great powers. Peking is working hard in Africa to win adherents to the concept. Peking has also made numerous advances in Western Europe, most formally by accrediting an ambassador to the European Economic Community. Though less openly forthright regarding the North Atlantic Treaty Organization because of ideological strictures, the Chinese constantly urge NATO to make itself stronger and better unified in order to resist Soviet aggression, direct or indirect.

"It would not surprise me," an astute European diplomat remarks only half jesting, "if the Chinese applied for observer status at NATO."

WHILE spinning such grandiose designs, the Chinese are looking to their own defense and to their bilateral relations, notably with the United States. Such concerns are only prudent, for the grand design is indeed visionary and, perhaps, incapable of consummation, though it is wholly in accord with the Chinese passion for transcendent conceptions.

But the world is changing so rapidly that it would be presumptuous to dismiss the Chinese vision as illusory. So many of the events of the past decade would have been regarded as utterly impossible by astute observers only ten or twenty years ago that one hesitates to exclude any possibility, however far-fetched. A new military-economic grouping under the banner of anti-hegemonism, originally loosely structured and, subsequently, more tightly bound, could fail miserably. It could, on the other hand, become the first functioning alliance based upon a concept three-millennia-old in a world where only rapid, kaleidoscopic change is constant.

At the very least, the Chinese endeavor to create such an association makes the Soviets extremely unhappy and perhaps more wary—thus serving China's immediate interests.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Palestine Before the Zionists

David S. Landes

> We are not against the Jews. On the contrary, we are all Semites and we have been living with each other in peace and fraternity, Muslims, Jews, and Christians, for many centuries.
>
> —Yasir Arafat

> The relationship that enabled Arabs and Jews to live together for centuries as neighbors and friends has been destroyed by Zionist ideas and actions.
>
> —King Hussein of Jordan

THERE are two theses that have won widespread credence in recent years as interpretations of the condition of Jews in the Arab world. The first, strongly advanced by Arab and particularly Palestinian spokesmen, is that Zionism is the root of all evil. Islam, runs the argument, is of its nature hospitable to and respectful of other faiths. Judaism is no exception; on the contrary, Islam has always had a special regard for Jews as "people of the Book," has given them shelter from oppression in other lands, and has accorded them peace, freedom, and the opportunity for material and spiritual self-expression. Witness the prosperity and cultural flowering of Jewish communities in Muslim lands during the Middle Ages: the Gaonate at Sura and Pumbedita in Iraq from the 7th to the 11th century, the Jewish "golden age" under the Caliphate of Cordova in the 10th and 11th centuries.[1]

The tolerance of Islam for Judaism, according to this thesis, was especially marked by comparison with Christianity. The Byzantines of the 6th and 7th centuries, the Visigoths in pre-Muslim Spain, the massacring armies of Crusaders on their way to redeem the Holy Land—these were only some of the more notorious agents of anti-Jewish persecution, oppression, and violence in medieval Europe. Supporters of this thesis often point to Benjamin of Tudela, the famous Jewish traveler of the end of the 12th century, who was forcibly struck by the contrast between the Jewish condition in the Christian capital of Constantinople and the Muslim capital of Baghdad. In the one the Jews had been expelled from the city and confined to their own quarter, where they lived in a state of oppression:

> This state is very severely felt by them and the hatred against them is enhanced by the practice of the tanners, who pour out their filthy water in the streets and even before the very doors of the Jews, who being thus defiled, become objects of hatred to the Greeks. Their yoke is very severely felt by the Jews, both good and bad they are exposed to being beaten in the streets and must submit to all sorts of bad treatment, but the Jews are rich, good, benevolent, and religious men, who bear the misfortunes of the exile with humility.

In Baghdad, by contrast, the Caliph was "extremely kind toward the Jews, many of his officers being of that Nation"; and Benjamin could not get over the respect due the Prince of the Captivity, the descendant of David, from Muslims, Jews, or members of any other faith: he rode a horse and was preceded by a crier; he was saluted as he passed; all were required to rise in his presence.[2]

The thesis of Muslim tolerance (in contrast to Christian anti-Semitism) cites these medieval instances of harmony as only the highlights of a millennial experience of fraternal coexistence. It argues that, save for episodes of fanaticism and persecution linked to sectarian excesses, the Arabs have always been good to their Jews and the Jews have been happy in Arab lands. From this analysis is drawn the inference that if only Zionism and Israel could be destroyed and an Arab Palestine restored, Muslims, Christians, and Jews would once again be able to live side by side in equality and

DAVID S. LANDES is Robert Walton Goelet Professor of French History at Harvard, and the author of *Bankers and Pashas, The Unbound Prometheus,* and (with Charles Tilly) *History as Social Science.* The present article, in a different form, will serve as the first chapter of a history of the Arab-Israeli conflict on which he is currently at work.

[1] For Arab and Jewish statements of this thesis in the context of what has since become a classic exchange of views and polemic on the Middle East conflict, see Rachad Hamzaoui, *"Les relations judéo-arabes au Moyen Age,"* and Nissim Rejwan, *"La grande époque de la coexistence judéo-arabe,"* in *Le conflit israélo-arabe* (special number of *Les temps modernes,* Vol. XXII, No. 253 *bis* [1967]), pp. 345-58, 823-42.

[2] Benjamin of Tudela, *Itinerary,* trans. and ed. by Adolf Asher (London and Berlin, 1840), pp. 55-56, 94-104.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

respect, this time in a new secular, democratic state.

The other thesis is very similar, though more general in its import, so that in a way it subsumes the first. It was advanced by the late Arnold Toynbee, then Director of Studies in the Royal Institute of International Affairs, and has been seconded with some modifications by Elie Kedourie, professor of political science and history in the London School of Economics and the scion of an old Jewish family of Baghdad.[3] Toynbee and Kedourie contend that the source of evil in the Middle East, the serpent in the Garden, has been the alien import of nationalism, with Toynbee excoriating Zionism as a particularly unjustified and pernicious form of this Western malady.

These references to past history are not simply an idle exercise in scholarly interpretation. They are, as the recent debate on the anti-Zionism resolution in the United Nations shows, the weapons of political warfare. Thus the Jordanian ambassador, contrasting European guilt for persecution of the Jews with the good conscience of the Arabs: "There was no situation similar to this in the East, particularly with the civilization where for centuries the majority of Jews lived happily and productively and to which they contributed in every way, namely, the Arab civilization."[4] And Mr. Al-Sayegh of Kuwait, stressing Muslim hospitality to Jews and reverence for Judaism, charged Zionism with destroying a harmonious relationship: "It was only when the Zionists came, and instead of the Jews saying, 'I should like to live with you,' the Zionists came saying, 'I want to live in your place.' It was only when the Zionists came that our hospitality turned into hostility for the Zionist. . . ."[5] To which that veteran of the UN wars, Jamil M. Baroody of Saudi Arabia, added that Zionism was not the work of "our Jews." "It was the European Jews who started this movement"—those Khazars "whose forebears came from the northern tier of Asia" and now claim Palestine as their own. "If this is not tantamount to racism and discrimination, what is?"[6]

These compliments to Judaism and to some Jews at least are not the language Arabs ordinarily use to one another on these matters; but they sound good and plausible to many Western ears.[7] Why? For the best of reasons: people are tired and afraid of the conflict in the Middle East and want to believe that whatever has gone wrong can be easily set right. Only get rid of the Zionists, say the Arabs, and the good will that is natural to the region will return.

Yet when all is said and done, there are no shortcuts, no magic formulas, and we shall not have peace faster and easier for ignorance of the obstacles. What indeed are the facts of the Jewish or non-Muslim condition under Islam before the advent of modern nationalism? Specifically: what was the condition of Palestine, and of the Jews there, before the immigration of secular Zionists toward the end of the last century?

II

IN 1895 the well-known French writer Pierre Loti visited the Holy Land and wrote of his experience:

> I traveled through sad Galilee in the spring, and I found it silent under an immense shroud of flowers. The showers of April were still falling, and it was no more than a desert of grasses, a world of light grains, taking on a new life to the song of countless birds.

The natural fertility of the valley of Esdraelon contrasted, he noted, with the melancholy decay of the works of man. The typical Arab village was a small huddle of dwellings protected by hedges of cactus from Bedouin incursions. Lying about and giving these "human nests the aspect of animal dens," were the fetid carcasses of horses or camels, rotting by day, food for jackals by night. Afula, the chief market town of the valley, was "sown with detritus," a charnel house. Of the area around Mount Gilboa, where Saul and Jonathan died in combat with the Philistines, Loti noted the return to wilderness:

> Here as elsewhere, as everywhere in Palestine, city and palaces have returned to the dust; also disappeared, the forests which once covered the heights of Gilboa; everything has been changed into a melancholy desert of brush and grass, where only the vines of Naboth have left a trace.

---

[3] For Toynbee, see *A Study of History* (10 vols.; London, 1934-54), VIII, 190-91; for Kedourie, see *The Chatham House Version and Other Middle Eastern Studies* (Praeger, 1970), pp. 315-316. Kedourie, however, agrees with Toynbee on little else. See his cogent and perceptive critique, "Arnold J. Toynbee: History as Paradox," *Encounter*, May 1974, pp. 57-66.

[4] Sherif Abdul-Hamid Sharaf in the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly, October 16-17, 1975. Compare the comments of Mr. Qureshi of Pakistan in the General Assembly on November 10, with special reference to the flowering of Jewish scholarship in Muslim countries in the Middle Ages. United Nations General Assembly, *Provisional Record of the 2,400th Meeting . . . 10 November 1975*, sect. 171.

[5] *Ibid.*, sect. 122.

[6] *Ibid.*, sects. 197, 207. This discrimination between Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews on the basis of alleged racial differences is today an article of the Arab political creed; so that Qaddafi, for example, can envisage the expulsion of the European Jews from the area as aliens and the redispersion of the Oriental Jews (Jewish Arabs) throughout the Arab world.

[7] For only one aspect of Arab attitudes toward Jews and Judaism—Muslim theologians speaking to Muslim audiences—see D. F. Green, ed., *Arab Theologians on Jews and Israel: Extracts from the Proceedings of the Fourth Conference of the Academy of Islamic Research* (Geneva: Editions de l'Avenir, 1971). There is also a wealth of material in Yehoshafat Harkabi, *Arab Attitudes toward Israel* (Hart, 1972).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The same of the plain of Gennesareth, "admirably cultivated in the time of Jesus":

> . . . the road from Jerusalem to Damascus went through there, bringing a continual traffic of troops and caravans; later on, the historian Josephus speaks of it as a sort of enchanted garden, where, thanks to this exceptional heat of low places, rare trees and flowers grew; but there also nothing is left: a small desert covered with almost impenetrable brush and rose bushes. . . .

The same of ancient Tiberias, once a center of administration, a popular watering place, an active fishing port:

> Not a road to lead to this Tiberias; everywhere the carpet of grass grows tranquilly right up to the foot of the walls. Not a ship along these dead quais, nor for that matter, on the surface of its little closed sea; oh! the sleep of these old towns of the East, immobilized in places without access, with the silence and the desert extending right up to their gates![8]

What Loti calls in one place "this melancholy of abandonment, which weighs on all the Holy Land," is a theme that recurs repeatedly in the travel accounts of the 19th century. As a result of centuries of Turkish neglect and misrule, following on the earlier ravages of successive conquerors, the land had been given over to sand, marsh, the anopheles mosquito, clan feuds, and Bedouin marauders. A population of several millions had shrunk to less than one-tenth that number—perhaps a quarter of a million around 1800, and 300,000 at mid-century. In 1874 the Reverend Samuel Manning remarked with pain on the desolation of the coastal plain—that Plain of Sharon, "the exquisite fertility and beauty of which made it to the Hebrew mind a symbol of prosperity."

> As we rode across the plain, bright with the vivid green of early spring, and plucked handfuls of the innumerable flowers—cyclamens, anemones, roses, lilies, tulips, and a score of others—which gemmed the turf or grew "unprofitably gay" amongst the corn, we could enter into the feeling of Hebrew poets and prophets as they exulted in "the glory of Sharon." But where were the inhabitants? This fertile plain, which might support an immense population, is almost a solitude. Two or three wretched hamlets, mere clusters of mud huts, are the sole representatives of the numerous and thriving cities which once occupied it. Here and there was a solitary Arab breaking up the clods with a plough which remains unchanged in form from the earliest ages. These were the only signs of life we could discover. Day by day we were to learn afresh the lesson now forced upon us, that the denunciations of ancient prophecy have been fulfilled to the very letter—"the land is left void and desolate and without inhabitants."[9]

As MIGHT be expected, the economy was unproductive; exchange, rudimentary; communications, poor; travel, slow and hazardous. Mark Twain (in 1867) made the trip from Jerusalem down to Ramleh and the sea via the Bab-el-Wad, today the site of a four-lane divided highway:

> We followed a narrow bridle-path which traveled the bed of the mountain gorges, and when we could we got out of the way of the long trains of laden camels and asses, and when we could not we suffered the misery of being mashed up against a perpendicular wall of rock and having our legs bruised by the passing freight. . . . One horse had a heavy fall on the slippery rocks, and the others had narrow escapes. However, this was as good a road as we had found in Palestine, and possibly even the best, so there was not much grumbling.[10]

Similar testimony was offered by other European travelers. A French visitor described Jaffa as it was toward the end of the 19th century:

> The city offers in general the most distressing appearance. The narrow, smoky streets, overhung by the houses on either side, are connected by black, viscous, half-collapsing stone staircases. Rotten rags dry on the ogival balconies.
>
> Such streets are nothing but vaulted passages, blocked up with garbage and filth, and resemble nothing more than sewers put to another use. Everywhere life seems immobile, stagnant, wounded at its very source. The pretty Moorish houses that one saw from afar turn out to be no more than crumbling hovels, open to every breeze, sketches of houses destined to remain forever unfinished, which offer indeed those empty, shadowy recesses, that dilapidated bareness characteristic of buildings in the course of construction.[11]

Even deader was Haifa, the greatest natural port in the area. A town of about 6,000, its commerce was just about at a standstill: "From time to time one loads on a little wheat, a few bales of cotton, and a few hectoliters of sesame." For Brother Liévin de Hamme, author of the standard French-language guide to the Holy Land in the last third of the 19th century, Haifa was simply a point of passage on the way to Acre: "This city, which has nothing remarkable about it, can be crossed in five minutes."[12]

So the Land lay sterile, and even a century of growing contacts with the West did not suffice to

---

[8] Loti, *La Galilée* (Paris, 1895), pp. iii, 37-38, 39-40, 41, 85-86, 69.

[9] Reverend Samuel Manning, *Those Holy Fields* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1874), pp. 14-17.

[10] Mark Twain, *The Innocents Abroad*, Ch. xxix.

[11] Jules Hoche, *Le pays des croisades* (Paris, n.d.), p. 10. As bad as the town was, it had beautiful, fragrant orange orchards in its southern and eastern suburbs.

[12] *Guide indicateur*, Vol. III, pp. 163, 190.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

remedy the evils of two millennia. Many of those who saw it and wondered at the contrast with the fertility and populousness of old could not help but reflect on the meaning of this decay. Christian visitors in particular saw in it the hand of God: the fulfillment of ancient prophecy, as Manning put it; or, as Catholics preferred, the visitation of dread judgment on the Jews:

> Besides, is there any reason to be surprised that a fertile land had become sterile after so much devastation? Jerusalem has been taken and sacked seventeen times; millions of men have been slaughtered within its walls, and this massacre still goes on, so to speak; no other city has suffered such a fate. This punishment, so long and almost supernatural, declares a crime without parallel, one that no chastisement can expiate. In this country fallen prey to fire and the sword, the abandoned fields have lost the fertility they once drew from the seat of man; the water sources have been buried under rock slides; the soil of the hills, no longer fixed by the efforts of vine growers, has washed down into the valley; and the hills, once covered with woods of sycamore, are now bald and arid.[13]

This was the general opinion, the conventional wisdom of a still believing world: that the Holy Land, *Terra Sancta,* was holy because it was cursed and cursed because it was holy; and that it bore witness by its sterility and devastation to the unpardonable, inexpiable crime of deicide.

AMONG the population in the Palestine of the 19th century religious differences were extremely important.[13a] The individual person was not so much a Turkish subject as the member of a religious community. Personal status, dignity, and civil and political rights were largely a function of this affiliation. Each group affirmed itself by opposition to others and by heaping scorn on those deemed inferior.

At the top of the ladder were the Arab Muslims, who formed the great majority of the population. Most of them lived in the hills of Samaria and Judea, or in the highlands of the Galilee—the areas least exposed to malaria. They cultivated a little grain, moved their flocks of sheep and goats from one hungry pasture to the next, picked olives and figs from those trees that could be protected from Turkish or Bedouin cupidity. Here and there among the hills were fertile valleys: that of Dotan (around Jenin) where Joseph went to seek his brothers and was sold into slavery; or the plain south of Nablus, given over to grain cultivation. These were lands that could nourish a large population, but in the Palestine of the Ottoman period, all crops were precarious until actually brought in. Aside from the natural risks of cultivation, Bedouin raiders made it a point to descend when the corn stood high on the stalk, either to seize the grain or ransom it.

Just below the Muslims in status was the Arab Christian minority, which lived for the most part in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Nazareth, the three cities most closely associated with the life of Jesus. Their religious life focused around the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, where every corner and pillar was a prize of sectarian combat. The Greek Orthodox, the Russians, the Maronites, the Roman Catholics, the Copts, the Ethiopians—these and others vied for positions of advantage, objects of sanctity, and moments of worship, particularly on those major festivals where there was not enough time or space for all. The Ottoman authorities presided over these intrigues and combats with some pleasure and amusement, and every Easter Sunday was the happy occasion for the imposition of Muslim authority and order on the undignified infidel. In the words of Isabel Burton, the wife of Richard Burton (British consul in Damascus in 1869): ". . . all the numerous Christian sects hate one another, and fight amongst themselves (to the intense amusement of the Muslims, who on great fete days flog them into order in and out of church, like a pack of hounds). . . ."[14]

Finally, and at the bottom, there were the Jews. At least some Jews had always lived in Palestine, even in those periods when conquerors had sought to kill them off or clear them out. We are told that there were even some Jewish village communities that had tenaciously maintained themselves in unbroken continuity for thousands of years.[15] For the most part, however, the Jews had survived in Palestine by shifting their residence at the dictates of their overlords, accommodating themselves to the tolerances of the successive rulers of the land. They clung as much as possible to holy places like Jerusalem and Hebron, but if life there was too difficult, they moved elsewhere within the country, always returning to their shrines at the first opportunity.

THE Jewish community in Palestine was significantly different from the rest of the population. It was older, being composed in disproportionate parts of pious graybeards come to spend their declining years in prayer and lamentation. It was almost entirely urban, for only in towns and cities could the men gather and study the sacred books. It was

[13] François René de Chateaubriand, *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem et de Jérusalem à Paris* (4th ed., 2 vols.; Paris, 1822), II, pp. 275-276.

[13a] Cf. Bernard Lewis, "The Return of Islam," COMMENTARY, January 1976.

[14] Isabel Burton, *The Inner Life of Syria* (2d ed., 2 vols.; London, 1870), Vol. II, p. 185. Emile Delmas, *Egypte et Palestine* (Paris, 1896), p. 336, reports one man dead in the previous year's fighting.

[15] On one of these communities, see Laurence Oliphant, *Haifa or Life in Modern Palestine* (2d ed.; Edinburgh and London, 1887), pp. 108 ff.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wretchedly poor, for the study of sacred books is more productive of spiritual than material reward. Besides, the Jews found it almost impossible to earn money in this inhospitable environment: James Finn, British consul in Jerusalem in the 1840's and 50's, writes that the Christians hated them so, they would not deal with them; while the Muslims had their own craftsmen, and when they had recourse on occasion to the special skill or knowledge of a Jewish workman, they often held back payment in the knowledge that the Jew would be afraid to press his claim. Finn found the Jewish artisans pathetically eager to work for the British colony and "able to do for us Europeans such work as the Oriental mechanics did not understand"; but there were limits to European custom, and for the most part, the Jews had to live by taking in one another's ragged washing. It wasn't much. As Finn put it: "There was no employment whatever to be had, excepting an occasional bit of work for some carpenter, glazier, tailor, etc., and the hundreds of willing Jewish artisans were obliged to exist in compulsory idleness, and chronic starvation."[16]

Indeed, the community could not have survived had it not been for the pennies and groschen and kopecks collected from Jews all over the world, who saw in such charity the next best thing to a personal sojourn in the Land: if they could not go, they would help those who did go, to live and pray for the salvation of all Israel. Meanwhile the Jews in the Holy Land had their own charitable obligations; poverty is no excuse. So they created their own charity money—little pieces of tin that could be exchanged for a spoonful of tea or a pinch of tobacco—and the poor gave these to those who were even poorer than themselves.

All of this was scarcely enough to keep skin and bones together. The Jews lived on the edge of starvation, and periodic famine found them more exposed than those who had a stronger economic base. Finn tells about the dearth of 1854: the Muslim peasants could draw to some extent on stocks; the Christians were assisted by the great Latin, Greek, and Armenian convents; the Jews had nothing, and desperation forced them to beg even in the interior of the British church, "to the amazement of the clergy officiating."[17]

As POOR, then, as Jews were in the *shtetlach* of Eastern Europe or the *mellahs* of North Africa, the Jews of Jerusalem were poorer. Their quarter was "by a long shot the most somber and unhealthful part of the whole city"—a labyrinth of narrow, filthy alleys and dark, fetid hovels. It was here that the city shambles was located—the place of slaughter—where wild dogs and rats fought battle over the foul, bloody mess of rotting carrion, a source of noxious odors and a breeding place for disease. The location was no accident. The Arabs found the shambles there when they captured the city in the 7th century; they also found the rock on top of Mount Moriah, the old site of the Temple, covered with tons of garbage, laboriously hauled up and dumped there by way of insult and desecration. The Arabs cleared the rock and built the beautiful mosque that we now know as the Dome of the Rock or Mosque of Omar. But the shambles was maintained, a lasting plague to the Jews of Jerusalem.

The Jews were the largest group in the city. Father Bourassé, writing in the late 1850's, gives their number as 7,000 out of a total of over 15,000 (5,000 Muslims, 2,500 Christians); Consul Finn gives it as about 10,000 in the period 1853-56.[18] So tightly were they crammed, however, into their overcrowded quarters, that (Bourassé notes) "if the population of the city were equally dense in the other quarters, it would be at least one hundred thousand." Their bodies reflected their housing and circumstances. Young and old, they were bent from their postures of prayer and study; their curly forelocks hung low along sunken, hectic cheeks; they walked with a shuffling, cringing step that told of blows received and blows expected. No one could mistake the difference between oppressor and oppressed—"between those poor creatures and the Arabs who jostled them in these crowded alleys, and who are such upstanding athletic men, with clear brown skins, clean-cut features, and heads turbaned majestically. They stride along with a spring in every step."[19]

To the Christian visitors, the physical appearance of the Jews of Jerusalem was at once a source of fright and of profound religious and psychic corroboration. Thus Loti:

> On entering this heart of Jewry, my impression is above all one of shock, of unease, almost of terror. Nowhere had I ever seen such an exaggeration of the type of our old-clothes dealers, rag merchants, and fellmongers; nowhere, such pointed noses, so long and so pale. Each case brings a new small stir of surprise and disgust, when one of these old backs, bent over in its wrapping of velvet and fur, half turns and a new pair of eyes gives me a furtive sidelong glance from between hanging forelocks and from behind the inevitable spectacles. In truth, that leaves an indelible stigma, to have crucified Jesus; maybe one had to come here to realize it, but it is indisputable: there is a sign inscribed on these brows, a seal of opprobrium that marks the whole race. . . .[20]

[16] James Finn, *Stirring Times* (2 vols.; London, 1878). Vol. II, p. 63.

[17] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 438-42.

[18] Abbé J. J. Bourassé, *La Terre-Sainte: Voyage dans l'Arabie pétrée, la Judée, la Samarie, la Galilée et la Syrie* (Tours, 1860), p. 112; Finn, *Stirring Times*, Vol. I, p. 101.

[19] Elizabeth Butler, *Letters from the Holy Land* (London, 1906), p. 17.

[20] Pierre Loti, *Jérusalem* (Paris, 1895), p. 126.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There were rules: Jews had to pass Muslims on their left side, because that was the side of Satan. They had to yield the right of way, step off the pavement to let the Arab go by, above all make sure not to touch him in passing, because this could provoke a violent response. In the same way, anything that reminded the Muslim of the presence of alternative religions, any demonstration of alternative forms of worship, had to be avoided so synagogues were placed in humble, hidden places, and the sounds of Jewish prayer carefully muted.[21]

MEANWHILE, for all their poverty, the Jews were more heavily taxed than their Christian neighbors. All non-Muslims had to pay a poll tax, as tribute and as the price of exemption from military service. But the Jews of the Holy Land also paid, both as a community and as individuals, a host of extortionate charges to local officials, Arab notables, and Arab neighbors—whatever could be squeezed from a very dry stone. In Jerusalem, for example, they paid £300 a year to the effendi whose house adjoined the Western Wall—what non-Jews contemptuously called the "wailing wall" or "wailing place"—for permission to pray there; £100 a year to the villagers of Siloam (just outside the city), not to disturb or profane the graves on the side of the Mount of Olives; £50 a year to the Ta'amra Arabs not to injure the Tomb of Rachel on the road to Bethlehem; and about £10 to Sheik Abu Gosh not to molest Jewish travelers on the road to Jerusalem, though he was already paid by the Turkish government to maintain order on that road. And just as European rulers supported state workshops and privileged factories by obliging their Jews to purchase those wares that did not find a market (the *Schutzjuden* of Berlin could fill their shelves with the monkeys that they had to take from the Royal Porcelain Factory), so Arab merchants in Jersualem dumped their unsold wares on the Jewish neighbors and billed them; it was a brave Jew who would send them back or deny purchase.[22]

There was nothing unique about all this: this was a society in which office was a property rather than a function, in which power was meant to be used for personal advantage, and in which everyone was expected to pay something even for the absence of trouble. Bribery (*bakshish*) was general; extortion, commonplace. The difficulty for the Jews was that they were the weakest, so that they were every man's prey.[23]

Nowhere was this vulnerability more heavily penalized than in the harmless but symbolically crucial sphere of religious observance. Some of this is apparent from the bribes paid to insure the simple right to pray in peace or rest in peace. It also showed in the Muslim takeover of important shrines and places of worship (a commonplace feature of the Arab conquests of the 7th century and maintained subsequently, even to the present day), combined with the systematic exclusion of non-Muslim worshipers.[24]

Thus the Muslims built a mosque on the reputed site of the cave of Machpelah at Hebron, the double chamber that Abraham had bought as a resting place from Ephron the Hittite and that he and Sarah and Isaac and Rebecca and Jacob and Leah lie buried in—the three patriarchs and three of the four matriarchs of Israel. For the Arabs too venerate these holy men and women of old, especially Abraham, father of Ishmael and hence their patriarch as well. Once the mosque was built, of course, the shrine was closed to all non-Muslims, who were permitted to ascend the steps to the entrance only so far as the eighth from the bottom. As a consolation for their exclusion, however, they were permitted for a fee to put their fingers or petitions into two or three holes-in-the-wall that presumably opened onto the cave itself; and for years thousands of Jewish pilgrims availed themselves of this small opportunity to commune with their forefathers. When Isabel Burton visited Hebron, she observed some of these petitioners and inquired about the practice. Her Arab guide informed her "with a grim smile" that all the "hapless Hebrews" were touching was the conduit for the water for washing the sanctuary, which surely made no difference to the efficacy of their prayers.[25]

Far more important, of course, than the cave of Machpelah as a center of Jewish worship and sacred shrine was the Western Wall in Jerusalem. This high wall, consisting for the most part of huge, roughly hewn stones, was part of the base

[21] These constraints also prevailed in Christian lands before the modern period, with its revolutionary notion of freedom of religion. Everywhere that Jews were permitted to live, for example, they were prohibited from building synagogues higher than the houses around; and the more discreet the site, the safer.

[22] Finn, *Stirring Times*, Vol. I, pp. 118-19.

[23] This general Hobbesian condition of brutish abuse and exploitation is sometimes advanced in mitigation of the oppression of minority groups—as though one man's trouble were justification for inflicting trouble on another and weaker. Cf. the comments of Professor Stuart Schaar in a discussion of the condition of Moroccan Jews: "What Professor [S. D.] Goitein calls the 'interminable history of cruel suffering' in reference to the Jewish population of Morocco is grossly exaggerated and would apply to most people in the society—especially during periods of social breakdown—who did not have the means to achieve power or influence the powerful." *Proceedings of the Seminar on Muslim-Jewish Relations in North Africa . . . May 19, 1974, Princeton, New Jersey* (World Jewish Congress, 1975), p. 31. I have never been able to follow this argument.

[24] It is only a few years since the newly installed Qaddafi government of Libya seized the Roman Catholic cathedral in Tripoli, converted it to a mosque, and replaced the Christian image on the altar with a portrait of President Nasser.

[25] Burton, *Inner Life of Syria*, Vol. II, pp. 185-86.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the vast platform on which the great Temple had once stood and where now stood in its stead two mosques, the Dome of the Rock (or Mosque of Omar) and El Aqsa. The whole platform area was and is sacred to the Muslims who believe that it was from the rock at the top of Mount Moriah, the same rock to which Abraham brought Isaac for sacrifice, that Muhammad ascended to heaven. It was and is equally sacred to Orthodox Jews—so much so, that even today they will not walk on it, for fear of inadvertently treading on the spot where once stood the Holy of Holies, into which only the High Priest might go. Then as now they prayed and wept below, though crowded then by encroaching Arab houses into a narrow alley, waiting their turn to touch the stones or leave a petition in a crevice, reciting the aching Lamentations of Jeremiah:

> Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction and of her miseries all her pleasant things that she had in the days of old, when her people fell into the hand of the enemy, and none did help her: the adversaries saw her, and did mock at her sabbaths. [I, 7.]

And mock they did. The Sabbath eve and festival service at the Wall were a must for tourists, come to see the touching but reassuring spectacle of these miserable creatures crying their hearts out under the scornful eyes of those who thereby knew that they had supplanted them in God's divine grace—*Judaea perdita,* the wandering Jew, the guilty, stricken children of the deicide people. Nor were they always content with looking: Elizabeth Butler tells us of "a party of Christian (?) [her question mark] European trippers (I will not define the nationality)" who "charged with their donkeys along the line of those preoccupied figures standing praying with their faces buried in their Testaments or pressed against the stones of the great wall, and knocked them over."[26]

The Wall also drew the spite and malice of the resident Arabs, who took every opportunity to harass the hapless worshipers, scattering broken glass through the alleys leading to the Wall, dumping their garbage and sewage against it, fouling it with urine and feces.[27] Here again is Loti:

> In the alleys leading to the Wall, blocked up with dead dogs, dead cats, filth of all kinds, I encounter a crowd heading the same way for the purpose of mocking—a whole Neapolitan pilgrimage escorted by monks, men and women wearing the red cross, like these noisy hordes back home heading for Lourdes.
>
> Along with this profane flood, I arrive at the foot of the Wall. Old velvet robes, gray old forelocks, old hands raised to curse [*sic*!], they are there, as expected, the elders of Israel, who soon will be nourishing the grass in the valley of Jehosaphat; less numerous than the previous time, however, and less calm as well in chanting the lamentations of their prophet. There before us, before our invasion, there is already a band of Arab children, there to torment them: little ones disguised as animals, as dogs, under burlap sacks, coming up on all fours with wild laughs to bark at their feet. On that occasion these Jews did rouse me to profound pity, in spite of everything [*quand même*]. . . .

On an earlier occasion, Loti had not allowed himself to be moved: "One could almost cry with them—if they weren't *Jews* [his emphasis], and if one did not feel one's heart strangely chilled by all their abject faces."[28]

ALTHOUGH the condition of the Jews was the worst, some of the rules applied to them, it should be noted, were no different from those applied to all infidels in all Muslim lands. All of them were *dhimmi* (protégés), second-class subjects excluded from armed service, owing tribute, and liable to a variety of disabilities and servitudes designed to express and signal their political, social, and moral inferiority. These were enforced with varying degrees of rigor in different times and places and on different groups. Thus the growing power of the West in the Muslim world was bound to affect in the first place the status of Christians and alter their relations to their Muslim neighbors; and indeed the history of Muslim-Christian relations in the Ottoman Empire in the course of the 19th century was one of sporadic explosions of wrath by the Muslim majority in response to Christian pretensions to equality and self-assertion.

The climax of this clash between the claims of equality and the habits of domination and contempt came after the Crimean War, when the Ottoman government, obliged by British and French military support and fearful of alienating it, issued a decree (the *Hatti-i Hümayün* of February 1856) affirming the equal rights of "the Christian communities and other non-Muslim subjects." To this the Muslim population of Syria and Palestine reacted with angry outrage.

The explosion came in 1860, triggered by a combination of political and economic pressures that the Muslim and Druse communities saw as

---

[26] *Letters from the Holy Land,* p. 80.

[27] On the broken glass, Jérome and Jean Tharaud, *L'an prochain à Jérusalem* (Paris, 1924), p. 207. (The Tharaud brothers were a remarkable case of the repulsion-attraction syndrome; they were anti-Semites with an irresistible fascination for all things Jewish and a talent for abusing the confidence of their victims.) On British efforts to halt fouling of the Wall, Storrs, *Orientations,* pp. 407-8, 466.

[28] *Jérusalem,* pp. 183-84, 128. For another example of childhood training in contempt and persecution, see the account of a game played during Lent by Arab-Christian children in Jaffa called "Burn the Jews." Michaud and Poujoulat, *Correspondence d'Orient,* 1830-1831 (Brussels, 1841), VI, pp. 73-74.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

part of a general subversion of the world they had grown up in. The times were out of joint: "Confronted by the menace of the present and the insecurity of the future, Islam, in order to preserve a conception of existence, regrouped consciences and passions."[29] This last phrase is an abstract euphemism of a kind that comes easier perhaps in French than in other languages. Thousands of Christians—men, women, and children—were killed in the Lebanon and Syria; many women were raped or abducted; and numerous Christians were forced to adopt Islam. Property damage was extensive, and even European consulates were not spared. Only the intervention of the Ottoman authorities and the appearance of European naval vessels off the coast prevented similar massacres in Jerusalem, Beirut, Acre, Haifa, and Jaffa. It was these events that brought a French expeditionary force to Syria and compelled the Ottoman government to grant a special, semi-autonomous status to the Lebanon, with its large Christian population.[30]

IF THE great religious clashes of the day opposed Christians and Muslims, it was not because other minorities lacked for grievances or opportunities; on the contrary. But it was only the Christians who were strong enough to challenge the status quo. The Jews "usually refrained from behaving insolently toward Muslims; they continued to carry on their life more as a second-class minority than as an equal community."[31]

In sum, the situation of the Jews in the pre-Zionist Holy Land (and in Islamic lands in general) was comparable to that of the blacks in the post-Reconstruction American South.[32] That may seem a far-fetched analogy to those who prefer to be selective in their compassion and do not want the consensual sympathy for the blacks to be appropriated on behalf of a cause they see as controversial. Besides, there is that one significant difference between Jew and black: the Jew could (in theory at least), and sometimes had to, save himself by apostasy;[33] whereas the black cannot shed his skin.

Yet even allowing for this difference, the analogy is justified by the facts.[34] The Jews of Palestine were designated as inferior (in law as well as custom), segregated by appearance and residence, subject to discrimination and abuse, and liable to sporadic and not infrequent violence. Lynching—that is, group assault—was not a common occurrence; but it happened often enough, and then with impunity, to constitute an immanent, imminent menace.

The response of the Jews to this was for the most part the traditional, almost instinctive one of emphasizing their helplessness and throwing themselves on the mercy of their neighbors. They learned to keep their place: any deviation from humility might be construed as outrageous presumption and serve as a pretext for punishment. The only alternative was to seek protection, either from some powerful Arab or, better yet, from one of the foreign consulates. This was not a course open to many, though their numbers increased over the century. In this, the Jews were following the example of the more advantageously connected Christian community.[35]

The most helpful of these foreign agencies in Palestine was the British consulate, which would not sell its favors. Finn was especially zealous on behalf of the Jewish community, in large part because he got to know it so well (he actually learned to speak Hebrew and Yiddish)—to the point of drawing a reprimand from his superiors on one occasion. The cause of equality was not an easy one. Finn describes how hard it was to persuade non-Muslims to protest against the use of opprobrious names; or to obtain justice before tribunals composed wholly or in their majority of Muslims; or to encourage victimized Jews to press

[29] Dominique Chevallier, *La société du Mont Liban à l'époque de la Révolution industrielle en Europe* (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1971), p. 268.

[30] The best sources for all of this are Moshe Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform in Syria and Palestine 1840-1861* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), chs. xvi and xvii, and Chevallier, *La société du Mont Liban*, Book VI.

[31] Ma'oz, *Ottoman Reform*, p. 209.

[32] There is even a study of the Jewish condition comparable to John Howard Griffin's *Black Like Me:* in 1883 Charles de Foucauld, an ex-officer in the French army, disguised himself as a Jew in order to visit those areas of Morocco that were closed to Christians. Foucauld, unlike Griffin, undertook his trip with little or no sympathy for his adopted co-religionists; which only gives force to his report of their oppression and misery. Charles de Foucauld, *Reconnaissance au Maroc* (Paris, 1939).

[33] Though the path from conversion (very easy in Islam) to full acceptance was often long: all societies defined by religious belief have ways of protecting themselves against easy entrants, especially forced group entrants. Converts often find themselves in a kind of purgatory between two worlds, sometimes for many generations (compare the Dönme in Turkey and the "New Christians" in Spain). The Moroccans say, "Don't trust a Jew if he becomes a Muslim, even if he remains so for forty years." And the Algerians say, "The Jew is a Jew, even after forty generations." Norman A. Stillman, "Muslims and Jews in Morocco: Perceptions, Images, Stereotypes," *Proceedings of the Seminar on Muslim-Jewish Relations*, p. 13.

[34] Clifford Geertz rejects this analogy—what he calls the majority-minority kind of model—for North African Jewry because relations of particular Jews with Muslims were highly individualistic rather than conditioned by membership in the group. But such individuation of relationship has always characterized the treatment of minorities, however oppressive. Even in Nazi Germany powerful men had their Jewish protégés. Such personal and particular relationships go far to account for the differences in perception of condition that characterize all minority groups; on one level, that is where Uncle Toms come from. In his comments on this issue, Professor Geertz does not offer an alternative model. *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

[35] Cf. Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age 1798-1939* (London: Oxford, 1962), p. 40.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

charges against Muslim neighbors who threatened reprisals.

> It was distressing to behold the timidity which long ages of repression had engendered. Many times a poor Jew would come for redress against a native, and when he had substantiated his case, and it had been brought by the consulate before the Turkish authorities, he would, in mere terror of future possible vengeance, withdraw from the prosecution, and even deny that any harm had been done him; or if that was too manifest, declare that he could not identify the criminal, or that the witnesses could not be produced. Still, even then, the bare fact that some notice had been taken had a deterrent effect upon the criminals who had hitherto regarded the defenseless Jews as their special prey.[36]

III

WHAT are the implications of this record of largely forgotten or blinked oppression? The first is that a major revision of the historical orthodoxy is in order. The condition of Jews under Islam was far better than in Christendom, but it was *incompatible* with human dignity. To be sure, some places and times were better than others: there were good rulers as well as bad, protectors as well as tyrants—just as there were always some Jews able or enterprising enough to surmount their handicaps and make their fortunes in trade, the professions, or state service. But these better times and these individual successes do not alter the moral and historical significance of protected, tolerated status. All improvement, for the group or the individual, was necessarily precarious because of the combination of civil and spiritual inferiority with political helplessness.[37]

Nationalism was not, as Toynbee would have it, an alien import into the Ottoman Empire: neither Greeks nor Armenians needed lessons on the subject in view of their own national histories. Nor did trouble start, as Arafat would have it, with the Zionists; it was among the Christian communities of the empire that civil rights, and then independence movements—starting in the Balkans, then moving eastward to Asia Minor and the Fertile Crescent—were introduced. Nor was nationalism the forbidden fruit that put an end to a state of grace in a Muslim garden of Eden. For one thing, the garden was no paradise; for another, the fruit was of the tree of knowledge, rather than of presumption. Suddenly the *dhimmi* infidels knew they were naked and inferior, and they were ashamed; and the Muslims resented their new look and new walk.

Would the Jews have followed the same path? One cannot say for sure. They were far behind the Christians, and centuries of training led them to take cover when Christians and Muslims clashed in the middle of the century. Soon after that, the question was moot: the Zionists came from Europe, Jewish nationalists, most of them secularized and distinguishable from the Jews already in Palestine by dress, manners, speech, and beliefs.

But if the experience of the other minority groups in the area is any indicator, the Jews of Palestine would have eventually produced their own secular Zionism, even without the *aliyot* from Europe. They had the heritage of religious Zionism to build on; they were increasingly conscious of their disabilities; stronger contacts with and support from the West were fostering self-assertion; and, most important, Arab resistance to these pretensions, fostered by the contemporary stirrings of Arab nationalism, would have reinforced Jewish aspirations. "Our Jews," says Baroody, would not have behaved this way if they hadn't been corrupted by those Khazars from the north. But are Jews that different from other victims?[38]

The second implication is also historical: the subordination of Jew to Muslim in the Arab world was the worst possible basis for the coexistence of the two groups in an age of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity. The aspiration of Jews (and other minorities in Islam) to the first two made the third impossible. From the beginning Muslim nationalisms —Turkish or Arab—had no "give" on these issues because their conception of the world and themselves made no allowance for sharing the high and noble attribute of sovereignty with *dhimmi* peoples.[39] Since dominion was reserved to the faithful, those many non-Muslim peoples inhabiting an area that has always been a mosaic of nations and religions were expected to submit, get out, or be crushed. Hence a history of massacres: the Chiotes and Armenians by the Turks, the so-called Assyrians (Nestorian Christians) by the Iraqis, the black animists of the Upper Nile by the Sudanese.

In Palestine the Arab reaction to Zionism was shaped from the start by cognitive dissonance. The Jews had always been seen as "children of

---

[36] Finn, *Stirring Times*, Vol. I, p. 127.

[37] See on this point the perceptive analysis of William Shaler, American consul in Algiers in the 1820's. *Sketches of Algiers, Political, Historical, and Civil* (Boston, 1826), pp. 66-67.

[38] This is the argument of Albert Memmi, *Jews and Arabs* (Chicago: J. Philip O'Hara, 1975), who contends that the Sephardic Jews of North Africa did not need lessons in Zionism from the Ashkenazim of Eastern Europe.

[39] As Gil Carl AlRoy puts it: "Since the Koran denies Jews a claim to dominion and they are held everywhere naturally submissive to alien protectors, the thought of the Jews as rulers suggests cosmic disorder, explaining the common resort among Arabs to Jewish statehood as 'abnormal,' 'unnatural,' 'artificial,' and in similar terms." "The Arab Myth of Zionism," *Patterns of Prejudice*, Vol. IV, No. 6 (Nov.-Dec. 1970), p. 7. See also his "Patterns of Hostility," in AlRoy, ed., *Attitudes toward Jewish Statehood in the Arab World* (American Academic Association for Peace in the Middle East, 1971).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

death (doom)"—hapless, helpless victims. The Zionists did not fit that image, but the Arabs long refused to adjust their perception to the reality. Some still refuse, which is one reason why Arabs prefer to see Israel as the creature of some outside power: it makes everything more understandable. And when Arabs insist that Israel can never be accepted in the area so long as it is Western, they are calling in effect for its suicide: in their frame of reference, a non-Western Israel, a Middle Eastern Israel, is a contradiction in terms.

The third implication of the historical record concerns the widely publicized program of the Palestine Liberation Organization for the liquidation of Israel and the establishment of a "democratic, secular state" of Palestine, in which Jews, Christians, and Muslims will be able to live side by side in harmony—as of yore. This is not the place to analyze this design, which envisages the departure of most of the Jews presently living in Israel under still unspecified circumstances. Suffice it to say here that it has found much favor in Western eyes because it seems to accord so well with our own notions of the good society. Yet everything we learn from the historical record would lead to doubts about the feasibility (let alone the sincerity) of the proposition. No Arab society has ever established such a state in the past, and none of the Arab states of today, for all the progress of modern secular notions, is built on these principles. The one country that moved in this direction, Lebanon, is today an object lesson in the limits of co-determination in an exclusivist Middle East.

It is the tragedy of Jewish religious and national aspirations that they should have as their focus a land in the middle of a great sea of peoples whose own history, self-image, and self-fulfillment leave no room for the self-fulfillment and self-determination of others. It is this as much as anything that has made the Arab-Jewish conflict so special in its absolutism, its fierceness, its resistance to compromise. Germans and French reconciled themselves after World War II; Germans and Russians likewise; even Germans and Jews. What counts is not so much the sense of wrong as attitudes: the adversaries must be ready to accept each other as equal, hence legitimately entitled to sovereignty. There has been much talk of Israeli reluctance to recognize the Palestinians. It is indeed a tenacious sentiment, but one linked essentially to political and military considerations, hence negotiable. But the converse refusal—the Arab (Palestinian) rejection of the legitimacy of Israel—has deeper roots. It will, the historical record suggests, be slower to change, and then only in obedience to unavoidable reality.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Fascism—The Second Coming

Walter Laqueur

WHAT is fascism, and have we seen the last of it?

On the precise character of fascism there is no agreement to this day. One might define it as a mass movement, headed by a leader whose command is absolute, which later turns into a state party, strictly hierarchical and elitist, ruling through terror and propaganda and the monopoly of political power, on the basis of an anti-liberal, anti-democratic, rabidly nationalistic and militaristic spirit and an ideology compounded of conservative-reactionary and radical, quasi-socialist elements. Yet no two fascisms have been quite alike; some have combined religious-mystical elements, while others, by contrast, have been sharply anti-clerical. At times racism has been a central factor, in other cases it has been marginal or nonexistent. Some fascist movements are barely distinguishable from old-fashioned right-wing parties, others are radical in doctrine and practice. If one takes Nazi Germany as the norm, then Italy under Mussolini was just a half-way house and Spain and Portugal were not fascist at all. If, on the other hand, Italy serves as the yardstick, Nazi Germany was an aberration, its excesses and radicalism typically German rather than fascist.

As for the historical role of fascism, the debate over this continues with undiminished vigor. According to one school of thought, fascism developed in Europe as a result of the crisis of the liberal system in the 1920's and 30's; it was a specifically European phenomenon; and it came to an end with the defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945. This idea, that the fascist era came to an end in 1945, is, however, not accepted by orthodox Marxists, who regard fascism as the agent of monopoly capitalism: as long as capitalism exists there is a latent danger of a fascist revival. And Marxists are not alone in maintaining that we have not seen the last of fascism. Others, interpreting it as an agent not of capitalism but of modernization, and observing that modernization, especially outside Europe, is accompanied by a great deal of violence and even systematic terror, have reached the conclusion that the potential for fascism is greater in the underdeveloped societies than anywhere else in the world.

The notion of fascism as the product of a crisis of European civilization was first advanced in the 1920's and came in several variants. Liberals regarded fascism as a revolt against "Europe," meaning the tradition of the Enlightenment and the idealism of the French Revolution. Believing Christians saw it as one of the manifestations of the loss of religious faith and, like the liberals, but for different reasons, as a relapse into neo-barbarism. Rauschning, himself a former Nazi, pointed to the essentially nihilistic substance of fascism; the particular doctrine was of little consequence, he said, the exercise of total power all-important. Elitist critics saw fascism as part of the 20th-century revolt of the masses, while others explained it as a modern version of Caesarism or Bonapartism. Some historians stressed the paramount importance of the personality of the leader: in this view, had it not been for Mussolini or Hitler, the parties they led would never have come to power.

It has been the fashion lately to dismiss these early attempts at interpreting European fascism as of purely historical interest, a little primitive, if not altogether outdated. But they all contain a grain of truth, and they compare not unfavorably with postwar interpretations, except perhaps for the fact that more recent theorists have been aware that fascism is too complex a phenomenon to be explained, as earlier theories tried to do, by reference to a single cause.

In many ways the most consistent early theory of fascism is the one originally propounded by the Thirteenth Plenum of the Communist International in 1933, that fascism is the "openly terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, chauvinist, and imperialist elements of finance capital." In the world of Communist ideology, where fascism is not an independent force but a mere agent, in accordance with the basic Marxist-Leninist tenet of

WALTER LAQUEUR, a contributing editor of COMMENTARY, is director of the Institute of Contemporary History in London and the author of many works on international affairs, including *The Rebirth of Europe*, *A History of Zionism*, and *The Middle East and World Politics*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the primacy of economics over politics, this thesis has more or less remained in force ever since, despite sporadic attempts from within to modify it. Thus, "enlightened" Marxists like Thalheimer and Otto Bauer in the earlier period, and a few others in our own time, have maintained that fascism was a unique phenomenon in the history of bourgeois society, for in the fascist state the executive was (or became) autonomous, operating in essential respects quite independently, or even against the interests, of the capitalist "ruling class." Yet such a position, with its implication that economic factors are not necessarily the decisive ones, is clearly anathema to the orthodox Leninist conception stated above, and much effort has therefore been invested in Marxist circles to demonstrate the primacy of economics in the Third Reich as well as in Fascist Italy. This is, however, not a simple task, for it must be shown in each case that the capitalists turned to fascism when they were no longer able to cope with an acutely revolutionary situation. The trouble is that in actual fact there was no revolutionary situation in Italy in 1923 or in Germany in 1933. Moreover, although it is true that the industrialist Thyssen gave money to the Nazis and that Mussolini, through the marriage of his daughter Edda, had an interest in the Italian sugar and shipping industries, this did not prevent Hitler from detaining Thyssen in a concentration camp, nor did it hinder Mussolini from having his son-in-law shot.

In short, it is impossible to demonstrate the necessary confluence of interests within German industry—let alone among industrialists, bankers, and big landowners—which would have led them to join together in support of the Nazis. No matter how widely or deeply one digs, the sums paid to Hitler prior to 1933 were not only modest in absolute terms, they were small in comparison with what was given to other parties. German industrialists did not "make" Hitler, they joined him only after his party had become a leading political force, and it is possible that Hitler would have come to power even if the Nazis had not received a single *pfennig* from the bankers and industrialists.

If it cannot be shown that Hitler depended on finance capital to come to power, neither can it be successfully maintained that once in power the Nazis subordinated their policies to the interests of "monopoly capitalism." Not only were Nazi anti-Semitism and the Final Solution not dictated by economic considerations and class interests; generally speaking, Hitler's entire foreign policy was not in the best interests of monopoly capitalism; on the contrary, it ultimately led to ruin and destruction.

Hitlerian fascism, then, far from recognizing its own class interests, even acted against them. This means—and it will come as an unwelcome admission only to the orthodox Leninist—that fascism cannot be satisfactorily explained if one confines oneself to the analysis of class interests. The attempt to explain fascism in this way has the additional disadvantage of leading its advocates perilously close to an apology for fascism. For if it is all the fault of the socioeconomic "system," why blame Hitler and Mussolini, who were after all only continuing the policies of their predecessors, perhaps with a little more vigor and determination? The difference between Hitler, Himmler, and Streicher on the one hand, and Churchill, Roosevelt, and de Gaulle on the other then becomes merely one of degree, not one of substance. Besides, as a movement directed against the economic status quo, European fascism might even be defended as representing a useful stage in the ongoing conflict between the have-nots and the plutocracies. Toward some such position of veiled advocacy the strict Marxist analysis of the role of fascism would seem inevitably to lead.

To be sure, no one can fairly deny that there is a clear link between fascism and economic crisis or that the social base of fascism and its economic policy ought to be studied closely. But equally no one can be taken seriously who has not accepted the fundamental fact that fascism is "about" political power, not about profit.

DURING the 1950's the debate over the nature of totalitarianism generated a whole set of apparently new theories about fascism. Actually, the most striking of these, that there are strong similarities between fascism and Communism, was *not* new, having been first advanced by Italian critics like Francesco Nitti and Luigi Sturzo who, writing in 1926, called Bolshevism left-wing fascism and fascism right-wing Bolshevism. But it was at the height of the cold war that the tendency to concentrate on the elements common to fascism and Communism became most pronounced. In *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, the late Hannah Arendt claimed that Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union were "essentially identical," and Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski drew up a detailed outline of the characteristics of all totalitarian regimes, ranging from an all-embracing ideology to an oligarchic mass party, complete control over the media, and a command economy.

To Communists this thesis was, of course, anathema, but criticism of it came from other quarters as well. After all, the historical conditions that gave birth to fascist and Communist regimes had been altogether different. Communist regimes, moreover, aimed at the transformation of society and at a new social order, whereas fascism was essentially conservative, or, at any rate, showed much less interest in socioeconomic problems. Some proponents of the totalitarianism argument had concentrated on features which, as it sub-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sequently emerged, were not of central importance. Thus, after Stalin's death, it became clear that the charismatic leader was not a *sine qua non* for the perpetuation of a Communist regime, nor were irrational terror and indiscriminate purges (which had been stressed by Hannah Arendt and others) a necessary characteristic of Communism.

In due course the pendulum of theory began to swing to the other extreme, and the idea of fascism as totalitarianism was altogether jettisoned, to be followed by a spate of new theories by sociologists, social psychologists, economic historians, philosophically trained historians, and others, many of them highly suggestive, none wholly satisfactory. Seymour Martin Lipset and, after him, Renzo de Felice, a leading historian of Italian fascism, pointed to the extremism of the middle classes which at a time of crisis turned away from liberalism to a third force, defending their interests against pressure from above and below alike. This may help to explain the social base of fascism in some countries (if not in others), but it contributes little to the understanding of the policy of fascist parties after the seizure of power. More useful was Lipset's emphasis on the populist elements inherent in many fascist movements, and the distinction between left- and right-wing fascist parties.

Another writer, Hugh Trevor-Roper, defined fascism as the political response of the European bourgeoisie to the economic recession of the 1920's and 30's, or, in any case, to the fear caused by the recession, a response which was above all anti-Communist. This thesis too is wanting, for if Communism was perceived as an overriding menace in the 20's and 30's (a doubtful assumption in the first place), it was certainly a much greater danger after 1945, when no fascist response was forthcoming.

Then there was Ernst Nolte, whose contribution to the study of European fascism has been second to none, and who provided a widely quoted definition of fascism: "Anti-Marxism which seeks to destroy the enemy by the evolvement of a radically opposed and yet related ideology and by the use of almost identical and yet typically modified methods, always however within the unyielding framework of national self-assertion and autonomy." Fascism seen in this light is a revolt against secularization and democratization—in brief, against modernism. Yet the movement which Nolte took as the starting point for his argument, the Action Française, while certainly reactionary, was not in essential respects a precursor of fascism; and his argument in any case is not of much help when applied to those quite numerous fascist movements in which the anti-Marxist element is subordinate. Nor should one overrate the utopian antimodernism of the fascist movements. However much Hitler praised the peasant way of life of ages past, he was perfectly aware of the need to develop heavy industry, if only to produce tanks and airplanes for the coming war.

Equally, one should not exaggerate the role of fascism in the process of industrialization and modernization. As long ago as 1932 Franz Borkenau propounded the thesis that it might be the historical task of Italian fascism to industrialize the country, since the Italian bourgeoisie had been incapable of doing so and since the militant working class had been "objectively reactionary" in holding up economic progress. It was a stimulating theory, but Borkenau's accompanying predictions for Germany were quite wrong and even in Italy events did not bear out his thesis, for Mussolini's contribution to the industrialization of Italy was modest, to say the least, and it was only after the fall of the fascist regime that Italy began to catch up with its northern neighbors.

After World War II the modernization argument took a different guise. Fascism (it was argued) had helped to modernize Germany and Italy by doing away with anachronistic social structures and by promoting economic development. This is an obvious enough point, yet oceans of ink were spilled to prove it. Any modern mass movement is a mobilizing force—this is what constitutes the main difference between modern and old-fashioned dictatorship. Nor can a modern dictatorship afford to neglect economic development, which results in turn in social changes. The problem is that the *downfall* of the Third Reich, which coincided with the physical destruction of much of Germany, also resulted in further socio-economic changes, and perhaps much greater ones. Partisans of the modernization theory might still claim that fascism, in contrast to Attila the Hun and the Khmer Rouge, is "objectively" an agent of progress, but at this point the argument becomes a bit far-fetched.

HAS fascism, then, disappeared? There would seem to be grounds for thinking so. Many of the regimes that have been called "fascist" by their opponents in recent times —Chile, or Spain under Franco, Portugal under Salazar, Greece under the colonels, or Indonesia under the generals—have in fact been anything but fascist. Rather, these have been old-fashioned authoritarian regimes, repressive in character yet conspicuously lacking the characteristics of a modern dictatorship. They have not been populist, not even Bonapartist; there has been no state party, not even a half-hearted attempt to mobilize the masses; and only in exceptional cases has the state intervened in the economy.

Yet that does not quite dispose of the issue, for if it was once believed that fascism was a specifically European phenomenon, impressing its mark on a whole era of European history, after World War II a whole series of regimes have emerged elsewhere in the world bearing at least some of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

distinguishing signs of European fascism. Today almost all the countries of the Third and Fourth worlds are ruled by dictators, about half of them military men and the rest either Communists, autocratic monarchs, or some other kind of dictator. (The exceptions are at present Venezuela, Colombia, Costa Rica, a few little islands, some "guided democracies," and countries such as Turkey, Lebanon, and Cyprus—altogether perhaps a dozen.)

Conditions in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East vary greatly, and so does the character of the new dictatorships. Some have been highly repressive, others only mildly so; some have made economic progress while others have stagnated, some military juntas have been more radical than others. Generally speaking, the effectiveness of a regime in silencing opposition has increased much more quickly than its aptitude in other fields.

Yet even though the new dictatorships are all different from one another, they have certain features in common. Making allowances for their lower cultural and social levels of development, in rhetoric they tend to resemble Communism, and in practice to display parallels with Italian fascism. They also often contain populist ingredients —such as the emphasis on *Volksgemeinschaft* and/or nationalism—which were part and parcel of European fascism. The cult of violence, which figured so prominently in Europe, has likewise reappeared here and there in the new regimes (it would be difficult to think of a more eloquent advocate of the "morally cleansing properties of progressive violence" than Frantz Fanon). So, too, the anti-imperialist, anti-Western ideology of the new dictatorships echoes the old fascist concept of a proletarian nation deprived by the plutocracies of its rightful place in the world—a concept on which the Nazis based much of their attack against the Versailles peace treaty. And finally, the racism of the Nazis and the admixture of nationalism with quasi-religious elements of other fascist movements have found new expression in Third World ideologies ranging from Mobutism to Qaddafism. The minute analysis of Third World ideologies is in general an unrewarding enterprise: the actions of the dictators are a surer guide to future developments than their announced ideas. Yet these regimes do contain fascist elements, if as yet in a primitive political framework (broadly speaking, the less developed a country the less pronounced will be the fascist character of its dictatorship).

Despite all this, there has been a reluctance to call these regimes fascist, and new generic terms have been proposed for them: developmental dictatorships, revolutionary dictatorships, or left-wing nationalist dictatorships aiming at economic development and modernization.

The search for definitions and explanations is made more difficult by the tyranny of a political language which evolved out of realities that have ceased to exist. If Marxism is no longer of much help in understanding the dynamics of Soviet or Chinese politics, what is one to make of references to "Left" and "Right" in Zaïre or Cambodia, or to "Marxist guerrillas" in Chad or Bangladesh? There is no room for conservative parties in the Third World, for there is little to conserve in an age of the break-up of traditional society. Equally out of place are liberalism and democratic socialism, the products of a long historical development culminating in the psychological attitudes of tolerance and consensus, attitudes which exist barely, if at all, in the Third World. Everyone in these countries is a nationalist and a socialist of sorts, two terms which have become interchangeable. But socialism means no more than anti-capitalism, especially where capitalism is represented by foreigners or national minorities. The leaders are intellectuals or, more frequently, semi-intellectuals ("lower mandarins") who have seized power through guerrilla movements or, more often, by transforming themselves into a military elite. Their political language borrows heavily from Marxism-Leninism, and as a result, the importance of the Communist element in Third World politics has been overrated. Nasser and Sukarno subscribed to fascist doctrines in their younger years, and there is little doubt what would have been the political credo of a Castro or Guevara and many Latin American guerrillas had they been born two decades earlier.

IT WAS the fashion among Western observers in the 1950's and 1960's to view the emergence of the new dictatorships as a progressive and on the whole desirable phenomenon. An entire literature praised the new one-party states and military dictatorships for their vigorous dynamism and competence. It was claimed in all seriousness that these regimes would establish the necessary basis for the growth of effective representative institutions. The one-party system, as one observer put it at the time, could often be a significant step toward the liberal state. Others commended dictatorship as the only effective counterforce to Communism. Even Soviet commentators, who generally displayed greater realism, were carried away for a number of years by a new theory of "military socialism."

These illusions have more or less been dissipated. It is one thing to explain the emergence of the dictatorships in the Third World as an inevitability, in view of the backwardness of the countries concerned. It would have been a near miracle for multi-party parliamentary systems to have come into lasting existence in these parts of the globe. (In this light, Mrs. Gandhi's introduction of "guided democracy" in 1975 is not so surprising; what is surprising is that unguided democracy

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lasted for so long in India.) But it is another thing altogether to assume, as many did, that dictatorship would be a transitional phase, leading eventually toward freedom and greater popular participation in government. Today it is not even clear that dictatorship is conducive to economic progress, as so many observers once assumed. Brazil under Vargas and Argentina under Peron did not make substantial economic progress; Sukarno and Nkrumah led their respective countries to the brink of economic ruin; and, while there were important social reforms in Nasser's Egypt and in Ataturk's Turkey, overall development was unimpressive and it is too early to say with any certainty that their reforms will last.

In truth the record so far has shown that economic success or failure depends above all on the presence of oil or some other important minerals, or on a hard-working population bent on improving its living standard quite independently of, and frequently in spite of, the policy of the dictators. And even in countries showing substantial economic progress, there has been no advance toward freer institutions. One can think of quite a few Third World countries—not only those that produce oil—with a much higher degree of urbanization and literacy, and an infinitely higher per-capita income, than Europe or the United States had in the age of the bourgeois revolution, but which still lack fundamental structures of liberty and civil rights.

If the optimistic predictions of armies' becoming an "inculcative force for nationhood" are no longer aired with much conviction, now army seizures of power are justified as an *ultima ratio*, the army being the only institution with sufficient "legitimacy" to preserve the fabric of society. Research into the legitimacy or illegitimacy of regimes, however, will not take us very far toward an understanding of Third World politics. There has been a great deal of confusion about this subject; legitimacy usually means no more than that a regime is reasonably effective. The fascist regimes of Europe, it will be recalled, were very effective indeed, and would thus score high in any legitimacy scale. Also, both Hitler and Mussolini would no doubt have won large victories in free elections around 1935—another index of legitimacy. And citizens of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy were allowed to travel abroad up to the outbreak of World War II—yet additional evidence of legitimacy.

The fact that there have been few military coups of late in some Middle Eastern countries like Syria and Iraq, whereas a great many occurred in the 1950's and 1960's, is sometimes adduced as evidence for the growing popularity of these regimes. Actually, all it shows is that the secret police in these countries have become more effective, and the military command structure more complicated, so that not every commander of an armored division is in a position to stage a coup. Syria, and in particular Iraq, are good examples of the transition from old-fashioned military rule to a "higher" state of dictatorship in which the army shares some of its power with the state party and the security services. The Syrian regime now accuses the Iraqis, and vice versa, of having established a "fascist dictatorship." Both are correct and both exaggerate; they have rightly analyzed the tendency, but full-fledged fascism has not yet come to power in Baghdad or Damascus.

WHAT, then, of the future? As long as the rulers of the Third World are unable to develop more or less effective political institutions, such as state parties, or to generate popular participation and enthusiasm, their regimes will resemble old-fashioned dictatorship more closely than modern totalitarianism. But the logic of events is driving them toward more modern and more efficient forms of dictatorship, and all modern dictatorships are bound to have fascist features to some extent.* Dictatorship in the modern world cannot survive without an ideology of sorts; it has to mobilize the masses through some form of propaganda, and it has to deter its enemies by repression and terror. On the political level, modernization in the Third World means a transition from traditional authoritarian systems to more effective tyrannies. Not all countries will be able to make the grade; some will stagnate or relapse into anarchy. The more progressive ones will advance toward political systems providing greater "legitimacy."

Meanwhile, the lack of economic progress generates frustration, and this is directed above all against the West. The very existence of working democracies somewhere in the world is a provocation and a danger for dictatorships, just as it was in the 1930's. Perhaps even more so today, because whereas the old fascist regimes had doctrinally rejected democracy, the new dictatorships subscribe to it in theory (and disregard it in practice). Political opposition to Western democracy is in fact the common denominator of most Third World countries.

Thus, while the Western world sticks to its free institutions, it will face great and growing difficulties in its relations with the Third World dictatorships. The United Nations may be irrelevant in terms of political power, but it still is an excellent barometer for indicating the general trend in world politics. The fact that the West has found itself in growing isolation in the United Nations comes as no surprise. The old and much despised League of Nations, whatever its shortcomings, eventually rid itself of the dictators (Germany in

* In the 1920's the concept, "exotic fascism," was used in the debates of the Communist International; it may well be resurrected one of these days.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1933, Italy two years later, and in the end also the Soviet Union). The United Nations, on the other hand, has been taken over by countries which, whatever their internal differences, agree that dictatorship is beautiful.

The trend is ominous, and equally disconcerting is the reluctance on the part of the West to face up to the new realities, the belief that by the ritual invocation of "common" values such as peace, freedom, and human rights, fundamental differences can be papered over. Describing an earlier age of tyranny Thucydides wrote that "words changed their ordinary meaning and took on that which was now given them." There still is the inclination, deliberate or unconscious, to deemphasize the meaning of one's own values, as if ideological confusion provided a solid basis for rapprochement between democracy and dictatorship.

Tyranny has been present throughout history, but there are periods in which it has receded and others in which it has assumed epidemic proportions. It is the great danger of modern despotisms, as of modern weapons, that they are much more destructive than in any past age. Enlightened despotism in the form of "tutelary democracy," in these circumstances, is a hope, not a foregone conclusion. Seen in historical perspective, European fascism may have been not so much the end of an era as the precursor of a new dark age.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Scandal of "Britannica 3"

Samuel McCracken

THE *Encyclopaedia Britannica* is, despite its name, an American institution. For over half a century, it has been published in the United States under American ownership, including that of Sears, Roebuck & Co. In public reputation, the *Britannica* has no serious rival, and a copy of the current edition is an essential in each of the country's thousands of public and educational libraries.

The recently-published 15th edition* represents the first thorough reworking of the *Britannica* since 1929. The decision to overhaul was undertaken, according to the editor, partially on structural grounds. As he explains it in his Preface, the structure of the *Britannica* had grown visibly more obscure over the years because revision—begun on a yearly basis in 1936—had been carried out with little regard for the original plan of the work. As a result, the encyclopedia† had gradually lost coherent design, and had become a collection of increasingly unrelated articles. The present edition was undertaken, among other reasons, to restore a sense of plan to the *Britannica*. There is no doubt that it is planned, and with a vengeance. But it is not clear whether the plan is an improvement, or merely an eccentric innovation.

Although known on its title page as the 15th edition, the new work is merchandised as *Britannica 3*. A more accurate, but perhaps less merchandisable, way of putting it would be "3 *Britannicas*." Or "*Britannica* in Thirds." The first section is known for some reason as the *Propaedia*, a term which must have been coined by the editors, since it occurs in no known language. The *Propaedia* fills one volume and contains a variety of ancillary material as well as an elaborate subject-index arranged according to one of those comprehensive partitions of all knowledge familiar to anyone who has come within hailing distance of the Great Books. The second section, the *Micropaedia*, comprises ten volumes containing brief articles (750 words or less), voluminous cross-references (the only alphabetical index supplied with *Britannica 3*), and abstracts of the 4,027 articles contained in the major segment of the encyclopedia, which is known as the *Macropaedia*. This third section contains the major articles and runs to nineteen volumes.

This arrangement has nothing to recommend it except commercial novelty. The *Propaedia*, at least, is harmless, for there is nothing in it that might profitably have been printed elsewhere. But the dismembering of the body of the *Britannica* into mini- and maxi-pedias is not only devoid of benefits, it has also given us the spectacle of a ten-volume index for a nineteen-volume work.

There is something to be said for distinguishing between topics best dealt with in small fragments and those best integrated into larger and more comprehensive essays. But nowhere in *Britannica 3* or its publicity have its editors justified their decision to isolate the two types physically. They merely assert its desirability: "It made eminent sense to collect these major articles into one part of the encyclopaedia. Previous editions had scattered them, according to the whims of the alphabet, among a host of shorter, factual entries." The major articles are still scattered in the *Macropaedia* according to the whims of the alphabet, and it would be interesting to know why the editors did not organize them topically rather than alphabetically, a practice with distinguished antecedents in the history of encyclopedias. Is it possible that at one time it was intended to do just this, and is the *Macropaedia* the fossil record of an abandoned intention?

The *Micropaedia* was fabricated in a novel way. Although a certain amount of its almanac-like material is no doubt original, the majority of its brief articles—those that are not simply abridgements of the articles in the *Macropaedia*—are staff-produced abridgements of articles from the 14th edition.** That is, none of this material has had the benefit of vetting by experts. It does not seem that the Editor was particularly proud of this process, for although he has in several places written with great fullness about the manner in which *Britannica 3* was produced, the one process he never describes is the cannibalization of the 14th edition and, following digestion, its regurgitation as the *Micropaedia*. Although the names of the authors of the original articles are supplied in an appendix, being described vaguely as "authorities" for the *Micropaedia*, the *Britannica* never makes clear that the work of these scholars has simply been exploited as fodder for the none-too-tender attentions of the rewrite men.

THE *Micropaedia* faithfully reflects its conception and birth: it is just the sort of encyclopedia one would expect rewrite men to produce. It is rife with exactly the kind of unexplained inconsistency

SAMUEL MCCRACKEN, *a frequent contributor to these pages, is Assistant to the President of Boston University.*

* Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 30 volumes, $699.00.

† COMMENTARY's style is to use the preferred American spelling; the *Britannica* follows the English spelling. Hence the discrepancy throughout this article.—Ed.

** The 14th edition was in circulation between 1929 and 1974, but it ceased to carry an edition number after 1940.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and eccentricity that the editor makes a point of claiming to avoid. It affects, for example, to use British spellings, though not in every case and according to no discernible principle. Yet it is alphabetized with a thoroughness that makes the telephone book look random. All kings named Henry I come in one series, followed by all kings named Henry II, and so forth. King John, lacking a numeral, is idiotically filed as John of England, between John of Damascus and John of Ephesus, placing him well after all the other kings named John, and far away from where the reader is likely to look for him. Proper names are said to be in the form used by their bearers unless there is a danger of obscurity, but the rule is applied very inconsistently (the German kings named Ludwig are listed as Louis), and although Japanese names are, as claimed, listed with family name first, sometimes the article itself confuses given and family names.

Equally erratic is the *Britannica*'s practice of identifying modern governmental jurisdictions for various historical place names. This is an admirable practice in itself but it is better done not at all than done badly, as so often here. Thus, the Danish physicist Olaus Römer is said to have been born in "Aarhus, Jutland, now in Denmark," leaving presumably countless readers with the false impression that in the 17th century Jutland was not in Denmark. What is the significance of such an error? The maker must be pretty ignorant of Danish geography—a minor defect, perhaps, but surely intolerable in someone who is trying to be authoritative about Denmark.

The biography of Thomas Arundel, an Archbishop of Canterbury who died in 1414, is illustrated with Rubens's portrait of Thomas Howard, second Earl of Arundel, who died in 1646. The person (or persons) who made this and other similar errors must have almost no sense of how people have looked in the past, even in periods that are well-represented in paintings. Nor is the linguistic scholarship of the *Micropaedia* above reproach. An alleged illustration of the first bestiary in English is not only of another manuscript, but of one in Latin.

To be sure, these errors, turned up in a few minutes' browsing, are fairly trivial ones, but as a matter of fact it is for exactly this sort of minor detail that encyclopedias are apt to be relied upon. An encyclopedia that is often wrong on such matters is like a clock that strikes thirteen: by committing a preposterous and blatant mistake, it puts all that it says into doubt.

SUCH errors of simple incompetence, however, can at least be remedied by a careful program of revision. A more serious class of defects involves not minor errors of fact, but serious misstatements and sometimes even downright nonsense. These are the fruit of entrusting the adaptation of the *Micropaedia* to people who are not only ignorant of the fields involved, but also who seem to have trouble reading an original text and understanding it. All too often, the abridged *Micropaedia* entries resemble nothing so much as papers cribbed from the *Britannica* by an incompetent high-school sophomore: a required quantity of verbiage gets transcribed, but somehow the facts are never quite right.

The entry on René Coty, last President of the Fourth French Republic, is a good example. Coty, we are told, "was generally unable to take forceful actions to resolve the multiple ills that plagued the Fourth Republic." If this is meant to imply that another President of the Republic might have taken forceful action and solved its ills, then the reviser knows nothing whatever about the French Republic since 1875. The only hint for this misunderstanding in the 14th edition is the statement that Coty was less active than his predecessor in "trying to influence policy." Further, we are told: "In May 1958, the Algerian crisis exploded, and, in the face of a coup d'état, Coty resigned to be succeeded by General Charles de Gaulle and a new constitution." Except for the date of the Algerian crisis, this is all wrong. Coty did not resign, but threatened to do so if de Gaulle were not made Prime Minister. When he was, Coty continued in office for another six months until de Gaulle became President under the new constitution of the Fifth Republic. One can only conclude that the author of this *pastiche* was unable to read the clear statements of the 14th edition and compress them without major error. If this is the sort of thing that results "from the most exhaustive fact checking ever imposed on copy for a general encyclopaedia," one trembles to think what a more casual checking might have produced.

Another example of the high-school student at work is in the entry for Napoleon's brother, Joseph Bonaparte, of whom it is said that "as eldest brother Joseph claimed to be Napoleon's legitimate heir since both he and his brother were childless." There are three important things wrong with this statement: the term "legitimate heir" is redundant; Napoleon was not childless; whether or not Joseph was childless is irrelevant to the question of whether or not he was an heir. If one turns to the article in the 14th edition from which this rigmarole was cribbed, one understands how an uninformed rewrite man might have produced it, for the account to be found there is of the situation prevailing at the founding of the Empire in 1802. Napoleon was at that point childless, and the question of an heir to the new throne did indeed arise. As Napoleon's elder brother, Joseph did claim to be his heir, and Napoleon, for reasons that should be obvious, rejected the claim. The transcriber of these facts unknowingly lifted them out of the context that gave them precision, and generalized them into a nearly meaningless hash.

One last example is too apposite to omit: in his Foreword, Robert M. Hutchins makes the claim that the 14th edition was strong on facts but weak on setting them into context: "If one wanted to discover the birthday of Marie Antoinette [to send her flowers?] . . . one could do so and be confident of the accuracy of the information received. It was harder to discern Marie Antoinette's place in history." Whether or not the new *Britannica* in fact does a better job of getting Marie Antoinette set into the context of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

history than the 14th did, it has certainly done worse on her family, for her great-niece Marie-Louise is said to be at the same time the niece of Marie Antoinette and (*mirabile dictu!*) the daughter of her father as well. It may be well to let sleeping Hapsburgs lie.

As worrisome as the constant small errors that deface the *Micropaedia* is the bleary sense of proportion. There is an inordinate fascination with minor figures, so long as they are topical: all the astronauts' biographies are here, as well as those of numerous professional sports figures, including in such comparatively minor fields as golf. No doubt a certain proportion of the *Britannica*'s readership finds these interesting, but surely the space could have been put to better use. How often does one have occasion to look up the birthplace of an astronaut? And why, for that matter, in a work that claims to be internationally oriented, are nearly all these sports figures Americans? For a foreigner to get in, it seems he must be a world-famous celebrity like the Brazilian soccer-player Pele; the English footballer George Best, as sensational a figure off the pitch as on it, does not appear.

These idiosyncrasies of proportion are not limited to sports. Gifford Pinchot, who is generally acknowledged as one of the great public servants of this century—founder of the Yale school of forestry, two-time governor of Pennsylvania, dean of the American conservation movement, instrumental in the founding of Theodore Roosevelt's Bull Moose party—is allotted a scant 3½ inches of space; on the same page, P. B. S. Pinchback, a comparatively obscure black Reconstruction politician from Louisiana, is given 11 inches. Pinchback's entry is a useful one, demonstrating among other things how far superior he and the other Reconstruction black legislators were to the stereotyped image held of them, but his career simply was not of the magnitude to warrant such expatiation, given the severe compression enforced upon Pinchot. There is more than a suggestion of some misguided notion of affirmative action at work here, made even harder to take by the fact that for Scott Joplin there is no entry.

To turn from the *Micropaedia*—so often apparently untouched by human mind—to the *Macropaedia* is a relief, for here at last we are faced with articles apparently written, and even proofread to some extent, by actual scholars, and the difference is immediately apparent. Much of the *Macropaedia* is of superior quality. Though it falls short of being that seamless web of knowledge claimed for it by its fabricators, still there are within its compass any number of first-rate articles. Although I am not able to comment on its substance, the writing on science—particularly in the area of zoology—is generally distinguished by its lucidity and elegance. The essay on visual arts in the West, especially the section on architecture, is exemplary. And a number of other articles as well are worthy of the tradition established by the 11th edition, and indeed add to it. It is sad that the editors of *Britannica 3* were not content with such solid excellence, and went wantoning after the strange god of innovation for its own sake.

But even the *Macropaedia* sometimes nods and falls out of its chair. The article on the topic "Encyclopaedia" is an especially spectacular example. The outline provided for it is confusing merely to read, and within the body of the text the author commits such enormities as identifying the Third New International Dictionary ("Webster III") as an encyclopedia; it may be remembered that the total exclusion of encyclopedia material from this dictionary occasioned wide protest on its publication in 1961. The account of the history of hobbies is unbelievably naive in its understanding of the place of leisure. Hobbies are alleged to have been formerly denied to the proletariat, so that scrimshaw appears not as the product of the leisure time of sailors but as an object for the delectation of the hobby-pursuing middle class.

By far the most serious flaw in *Britannica 3*, however, and one which is beginning to cause a major scandal in scholarly circles, is its political tendentiousness, not to say its outright bias. This is to be seen most obviously when one compares the entries for New York and Moscow. The former describes a city in crisis, beset with crime, drug addiction, random sadism, slum housing, and a variety of other problems which will come as no surprise to New Yorkers. The author has not made any of this up, and he has also included much that is favorable about New York, but the impression remains of an ungovernable garrison city on the verge of capture.

In the article on Moscow, by contrast, we find ourselves not merely on a different continent, but in a different universe. All is upbeat, even cheerful; World War II was only a passing phase: "By 1950, the painful traces of this conflict had been eliminated, and the capital had undergone a transformation unparalleled by any other major world capital." No unpleasant reality is allowed to intrude, save perhaps for the inadvertent admission contained in the statement that the government's "gigantic" housing program has as its goal (date of attainment unspecified) a flat of its very own for every Muscovite family and in that flat a room of his own for every Muscovite.

The language in which the Moscow article is written is at first puzzling—not quite American or British English, but still very good; upon reflection, one realizes it is the English one hears on Radio Moscow—the correct but clearly distinctive English of a cultural bureaucracy. And with good reason: the initials appended to the article belong to one Ivan Kirillovich Myachin, described as Head of Section, Mysl Publishing House, Moscow.

Mr. Myachin may be perfectly trustworthy in certain respects: there seems, for example, no reason to doubt his account of the Moscow subway. It's what he leaves out that is bothersome. Eloquent about the role of the Moscow workers in the revolution of 1905, and the October revolution of 1917, he simply ignores the revolution of March 1917—the revolution which deposed the Czar and brought to power the short-lived liberal re-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gime headed by Alexander Kerensky. Mr. Myachin is equally reticent about more contemporary matters. Would not as hard a look at Moscow as is here applied to New York have turned up a thing or two wrong with the Soviet capital? Crime on the streets may be pretty well under control in Moscow, but what about crime under the streets, say in the cellars of Lubyanka prison?

Taken together, these two articles illustrate a perfect double standard. And though a Muscovite reading the article on Moscow would presumably know better than to take Mr. Myachin quite literally, a Nigerian reader equally uninformed about both cities and attempting to compare them would be bound to draw exceedingly unfavorable conclusions about New York.

The same travelogue air pervades all the articles on Eastern European countries and for the same reason: all of them have been written by government employees. Those on the Soviet Republics were actually supplied to the *Britannica* by Novosti, the official Soviet press agency.

The implications of this fact may take a moment to sink in: these *Britannica* articles have, perforce, been passed through the crystalline lattices of Soviet censorship. As surely as that censorship pulled the plug on the American networks on the occasion of Richard Nixon's last visit to Moscow, it controls, courtesy of the *Britannica*, what many Americans will know of Eastern Europe. The article on Czechoslovakia is typical of the view they will get: it somehow forgets to mention the events of August 1968. The *Britannica* does not actually suppress these unpleasant events; it simply squirrels them away in an article entitled, "Bohemia and Czechoslovakia, History of," the great virtue of such a heading being that it safely prevents the topic from getting in the way of the sunny present.

The *Britannica*'s selection of authors for these articles has been justified on the principle of having foreign countries discussed by nationals of those countries. If this principle had governed the 14th edition, one can imagine who would have written the article on Germany for the 1938 revision.

The travelogue is not confined to the *Macropaedia*. The *Micropaedia* contains an article on the so-called "Karelian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic," in which we are told of that statelet's great progress since "the Great October Socialist Revolution." This surrender to the explicit jargon of totalitarianism comes on a small point, but it shows how far *Britannica 3* is from having any way of insuring even verbal neutrality.

THE problem of political bias in *Britannica 3* goes deeper, however, than travel brochures handed out by Communist governments. In such articles, at least, the bias is easily spotted and may be allowed for by a moderately knowledgeable reader. But there are also articles by American scholars which are less blatantly, though no less dangerously, biased. One such case is the article on international relations by the historian William Appleman Williams, which sets forth the familiar revisionist interpretation of American culpability for the cold war. There is nothing inherently wrong with contributions by revisionist historians, of whom Williams is certainly among the best, but such contributors owe their readers some acknowledgment of their own position in the ideological spectrum, as well as of the range of opinion on the subject under scrutiny. These Williams does not supply. After a perfunctory sketch of the opposing view, he goes on to make highly debatable assertions as though they were self-evident. Thus, writing about John Foster Dulles's foreign policy, Williams states that "Dulles's rhetoric about liberating the people under Communism could not be acted upon because such an effort would very probably produce a nuclear war (just as if the Soviets had intervened to liberate Mexico or Canada)."

In a world in which the Soviet Union has three times sent tanks against civilians in order to maintain its Eastern European empire, this casual equation of America's relation to Canada and Mexico with Russia's relation to its satellites amounts to deliberate deception. Such an equation would be excessive even according to the ground rules of avowed polemic; in a piece of allegedly neutral scholarship it is inadmissible.

The further one looks, the more examples one finds of such bias. In the article on colonialism—which is here made interchangeable, incidentally, with imperialism—the period from 1945 to 1970 is covered by Harry Magdoff, an editor of the Marxist *Monthly Review*. Not surprisingly, the Soviet Union figures in Mr. Magdoff's discussion only as one of colonialism's opponents. In his account of colonization and imperialism he ignores the USSR's occupation and annexation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and its annexation of portions of Poland and Germany. In his discussion of decolonization, he ignores the Central Asian colonies acquired by the Czars and to this day held on to by the Soviets. And in his discussion of neocolonialism (which he defines as "the existence of considerable foreign direction over a nominally independent nation") he ignores the empire maintained by the Soviets in Eastern Europe. He, too, ignores the invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968. We can look forward, in the next revision, to his account of Angola.

The editors of the *Britannica* walked onto thin ice when they assigned such obviously loaded subjects to such writers. Worse, they clearly made little or no attempt to square the text these writers produced with their own announced principle that "Articles should . . . avoid expressions of bias or prejudice on any matter about which a respectable and reasonable difference of opinion exists. . . ," and that "in all areas in which the scholarly world acknowledges significant and reputable differences of opinion, diverse views concerning such differences should be fairly presented, though the majority or accepted view may be so designated."

The fate suffered by Ernest van den Haag's article on civil disobedience is instructive in this connection. The article had originally been commissioned by the present Editor's predecessor, according to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

van den Haag's account of the episode,* and had been both accepted and paid for. When, in due course, he failed to receive galley proofs, the author queried the new Editor, who replied that owing to a "reorganization" the article would not be appearing. Further inquiries elicited the information that the article had in the end been judged not sufficiently "encyclopaedic," and that the *Britannica* had decided not to publish any article at all on civil disobedience because "we do not now think that we will be able to obtain at this time an encyclopaedically acceptable, dialectically neutral article on the subject."

As it happens the *Micropaedia* does contain a brief and rather innocuous article on civil disobedience, though on allied subjects there is an extraordinary reserve; the entries on "Freedom of Speech" and "Freedom of the Press," for example, are each one-sentence long and contain one cross-reference apiece. But this is beside the point. Equally beside the point are the merits of van den Haag's article, a scholarly and non-tendentious treatment of a complex subject, which was published both in the *National Review* and later as a Harper Torchbook. The real point is that the principle of "dialectical neutrality" by which van den Haag's piece was judged is invoked selectively and perversely by the editors. It is not applied to Marxist polemic, but is spuriously employed to silence a prominent conservative scholar, regardless of the merits of his contribution. It is almost as if the Editor had decided to reject van den Haag's piece unread.

WHERE does the blame for all this lie? Warren Preece, the editor, whose talents are glowingly described in the Foreword by Robert M. Hutchins, is the man officially in charge. Some of the flavor of Mr. Preece's operation is conveyed in a recent article by him in the *Britannica*'s house organ, in which he jocularly reveals that shortly after a world-famous authority in linguistics had agreed to write for the encyclopedia, his chained body was fished out of an Eastern European river. When application was made on my behalf to Mr. Preece's office for the name of the central figure in so sensational an episode, his secretary said that he had forgotten the details, and that the records in the case had lamentably been destroyed.

That such a memorable incident seems to have escaped from Mr. Preece's memory and his records alike does not speak well for the tightness of his editorial ship. But given the tangled infrastructure and far-flung advisory network of the *Britannica*, it is hard to lay responsibility at any one office door. The matter is still further complicated by the equivocal relation between the *Britannica* and the University of Chicago.

Facing the title page of each volume of the *Britannica* is the statement that "The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* is published with the editorial advice of the faculties of the University of Chicago; a committee of persons holding academic appointments at the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, London, and Edinburgh; a committee at the University of Toronto; and committees drawn from members of the faculties of the University of Tokyo and the Australian National University." Under this statement, as if to make the point quite clear, appears the coat of arms of the University of Chicago.

The statement itself is worded with exquisite care: it is only by checking a list in the back of the *Propaedia* that one discovers that the "committee at the University of Toronto" is not composed of faculty of that university, but rather of editors of its press. There is nothing wrong, of course, with having advice from university-press editors; one wonders why the editors of the *Britannica* seem to be at pains to disguise the true nature of this committee.

Who in fact serves on these committees? According to the list in the *Propaedia*, there are a number of very distinguished names among them, but there is no way of knowing just what these individuals do, or whether they have any role in setting policy. Nor, for that matter, is there any way of knowing just what is meant by "the editorial advice of the faculties of the University of Chicago," since it is obvious that those faculties do not gather to read the *Britannica* proofs. Whatever the exact nature of this advisory function, it is clear that the benefits accruing from the Chicago connection matter less than the inestimable prestige and legitimation conferred by the appearance of university sponsorship.

IT MUST be remembered that the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* is produced, published, and distributed, not by the University of Chicago, but by a commercial enterprise called Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. According to the Federal Trade Commission, this corporation's sales practices include recruiting salesmen with the bait of nonexistent "executive" positions, gaining entry to houses on false pretexts, and falsely claiming that the sales price represents a sharp discount. Such practices have involved Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. in litigation before the FTC for the past thirty years, and an FTC judge has recently once again held them unlawful and ordered the company to cease and desist from them. It is probably generally assumed—with how little foundation should be apparent—that the intellectual standards of the *Britannica* are those of the University of Chicago rather than of dance-lesson salesmen. The Chicago connection is the principal reason for this general assumption, and the connection is therefore of immense benefit to Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.

What the university for its part gets out of the arrangement is less clear. According to a statement printed in the 14th edition, the university receives a royalty in exchange for its editorial services, but has no control over the operation of the *Britannica*. In effect, then, the university, whether wittingly or not, allows its name, and the prestige that it confers, to serve as a kind of trademark for a commercial enterprise which consistently fails to live up to its own intellectual standards, and to the university's as well.

* In the *National Review*, January 21, 1972.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Robert M. Hutchins has described the editors of *Britannica 3* as pioneers. After they had established their design "the question became one of execution . . . there were no models to imitate and no horrible examples to shun." One of these deficiencies has been made good by *Britannica 3* itself: they have their horrible example now.

In Defense of Sports

William J. Bennett

COMPETITIVE athletics, currently under scrutiny, is being subjected to a method of investigation that assumes the most significant aspects of anything are those concealed from the eye. Jack Scott, friend of Bill Walton and allegedly connected with Patty Hearst and the SLA, is the would-be chief muckraker and reformer of this loved part of American life. In the New York *Times* recently, Scott "revealed" that American sports is really just an instrument of monopoly capitalism whose primary purpose is to force upon men an obsession with masculinity. Scott is not alone in his efforts to tell the whole truth about our games. A flurry of books—Scott's own *The Athletic Revolution,* Paul Hoch's *Rip Off the Big Game,* Joseph Durso's *The Sports Factory,* George Leonard's *The Ultimate Athlete**—have hit this and related themes. These books, written mostly by non-athletes, have come in the wake of books by the players themselves—*Out of Their League* by Dave Meggysey, *They Call It a Game* by Bernie Parrish, *High for the Game* by Chip Oliver, and the early and popular *Ball Four* by Jim Bouton. Mixed in have been some works of fiction which simultaneously apotheosize and make fun of sports and athletes—the sybaritic *Semi-Tough* by Dan Jenkins and the interesting but maudlin *North Dallas Forty* by former Dallas receiver Pete Gent.

The lessons these books teach are that sports and sportsmen are exploited by a power elite; that college football players are members of a "frenzied slave market" and victims of torture and drills which resemble concentration-camp musters; that drugs and amphetamines are part of the professional athlete's steady diet; that organized athletics systematically emphasizes "cool" over character; and that athletes offer a particularly offensive and dangerous misrepresentation of the sporting life to children. Sports in America is alleged to be sexist, racist, and male-chauvinistic. America's gods of the playing field are made of clay, or lesser stuff, their strengths chemically derived, and their power and charms media-created; these drugged beasts are used and abused once a week for the pleasure and gain of corporate-boardroom masters; our adulation of these heroes leads to a national celebration of violence, causing fans to become savage in the stands, in parking lots, and at home in front of the TV.

Russell Baker wrote a few years ago that sports in America is the opiate of the people. The charge is repeated by Paul Hoch, who also denounces "industrial workers . . . so radically involved with the fates of their sports heroes that they are perfectly oblivious to the exploitative conditions in their own factories." The values of the young are distorted by our overemphasis on winning, according to these authors. Mystical insights and transcendental visions lose out in a "system" of sports instruction that puts the emphasis on "wars" of competition. The war connection is one repeatedly emphasized: interest in sports and athletics has the same roots as interest in military battle; "we play our games, or watch them contested, with the same ferocious tenacity with which we fight a war in Vietnam and with as little reason or sense" (Leonard Schechter, former sports editor of *Look,* quoted in *Rip Off the Big Game*). The politics of sports are "reactionary," says Jack Scott, pointing to "the conservative militaristic nature of intercollegiate athletics." Football comes close to "political fascism . . . in its cultivation of mass hysteria," according to John McMurtry, a former Canadian-league player, and "enthusiasm for sports events brings to mind the decadence of the Roman Empire," according to a "scholar" of soccer (Alex Natan, *Sport and Society*).

IS THERE anything good to be said for sports? These critics argue that athletics does have a purer side, a redemptive side, that needs to be rediscovered and reaffirmed. Yet the recovery of this side of the game depends upon overcoming our fixation on "winning" and on competition. Thus George Leonard in *The Ultimate Athlete* writes of striving for a new unity in a "Game of Games that joins the limited human body with the limitless possibilities of consciousness and being"; for this "we need balance and harmony, sensitivity and the art of reconciliation—not ego, the test of

WILLIAM J. BENNETT *teaches law and philosophy at Boston University.*

* *The Athletic Revolution,* Free Press, 242 pp., $5.50; *Rip Off the Big Game,* Doubleday-Anchor, 222 pp., $1.95 (paper); *The Sports Factory,* Quadrangle, 207 pp., $8.95; *The Ultimate Athlete,* Viking, 273 pp., $8.95.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

manhood, the clash of force against force, the battle of God against the Devil." (Specifically, Leonard recommends such non-competitive games as Infinity Volleyball, Mating, and Environmental Tag.) Will Hetzel, University of Maryland basketball star, is quoted by both Hoch and Scott: "Athletics can be such a beautiful thing. It's a shame to have to keep score. In fact it's a shame to have to keep score on anything in life.' Meggysey speaks of "the death culture versus the life culture" where "the life culture is trying to say something else. It's saying instead of competition let's think about cooperation." Then there is Chip Oliver's ideal:

> I have a vision of a team without coaches, without silly restrictions or rules. It would be a communal team where the players would live together, eat only the finest natural foods and practice yoga and transcendental meditation. The entire element of control from coaches would be gone. Each man would control himself so as to be his best. Each man would strive toward the goal of being good, but there would be no punishment for failure except the natural punishment of not being as good as you could be. Success would exclude failure and punishment, and winning and losing would be seen in only a relative sense. The outcome, the decision, of the game would be unimportant. The game itself, in fact, would all but disappear. The members of the team would do the Dance of Football. . . . I firmly believe in a team living together like that, as brothers sharing brown rice and doing everything in the spirit of meditation, including football practice. . . .

IT SHOULD be enough simply to quote as I have been doing from the critics' abundant stores of transcendent silliness, dime-store Marxism, and countercultural blather to expose the deficiencies of their critique, but they appear to be striking a note which many are all too ready to hear. To those who are drawn to the simple-minded culture of opposition, games as games are easy targets, and the effect of a hyperbolic statement like, "we play games while children are dying," is obviously extremely arresting (even though few would consider it an effective argument against personal cleanliness to say that "while bombs are being dropped we are brushing our teeth and shampooing our hair," not to mention blowing dope or eating brown rice).

But it is one thing to attack human greed or to grieve over the fact that man is often a wolf to other men; it is another thing to contend, as these critics do, that any activity in which unattractive human qualities may appear is therefore the producer of those qualities. Grant the presence of stupidity, narrowness, exploitation, cruelty, and weakness in sports—why should it be immune to the normal afflictions of the human condition?—and grant too that many things go on at and in games that should not be seen by children and do not deserve to be imitated by anyone. None of this, however, is consistent with the *nature* of sports. The eruption into violence on the field or in the stands is in fact a degradation, not a perfection, of the game. It is the opposite of the game. If sports, in George Orwell's phrase, is "war minus the shooting," as these critics seem to be saying, it comes out remarkably well in the comparison. Mike Barnicle of the Boston *Globe* has written accurately of the "pure insanity and hatred inside the Boston Garden" when the game of ice hockey "is *overshadowed* [my emphasis] by the primal example of blood on ice." In Boston too, in Fenway Park, a fan had his throat slashed in the stands last season. That this is senseless is of course obvious, but how is it that the game, and not the man who wields the knife, is held responsible? Who endorses blood-letting and the glorification of violence? Who justifies excess? (Or who, for that matter, justifies the gratuitous slaughter of civilians in war?) To ask such questions is to see the self-serving hollowness of this sort of reductive thinking. Sheer uncontrolled violence in sports, often called unnecessary roughness, unsportsmanlike conduct, is not a part of the game. On the contrary, it stops the game, nullifies the play.

No matter what else it is, sports has always been an arena in which children can grow in light of unambiguous, tangible universal standards and measures. With proper supervision and coaching the only limits are those of an individual's abilities and the abilities of the best players of the game. Sports is still an activity in which excellence can be seen and reached for and approximated each day; sports has been relatively unaffected by the general erosion of standards in the culture at large.

Critics charge that competitive sports is not conducive to the development of character. Is this true? My own high-school coach, a Marine, taught "toughness without callousness," as William James put the ideal. He taught us the difference between real strength and the mere show of strength, a lesson ignored by Scott, Leonard, Hoch, and Durso. He talked to his big linemen about not throwing their weight around in the street or in cars, about how strength was to be shown on the field against someone your own size in a fair match in pads. For coaches like that, the main issue is one of consistency of performance, which is an issue of character. The coaches who dot the pages of Scott's *The Athletic Revolution* only encourage boys to beat up hippies.

Everyone knows where the truth lies in these matters, really. It is not for nothing that the attempts to deathleticize athletics and to deflate the country's interest in sports have met with uniform failure. Countercultural sports programs have dried up: Scott's own efforts as director of athletics at Oberlin College ended in his being forced to resign, and if trustworthy reports are to be believed, his "reforms" at Oberlin not only did not replace bad values with good ones but themselves provided instruction in decanal authoritarianism. Dave Meggysey "explains" such failures by saying that "the revolution" is in a period of gestation, but the fact is that the revolution has not done and cannot do what its progenitors argued it must do—replace the values of winning and competition with other and better non-competitive values. As a nation, Americans have expressed more, not less, interest in competitive athletics since the "rev-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

olution" began, and if anything seem to be resisting the tendencies toward leveling in sports. More people are playing sports, going to sporting events, and watching games on TV; baseball set attendance records last year. There is more interest on the part of women in competitive sports; "new" sports—tennis and soccer—are gaining prominence, Pele joins Namath in broad TV coverage. Even box lacrosse might make it; Hollywood's "Rollerball," with no rules, will not.

THE team I now play on, a team of former athletes, is a slow-pitch softball team called the Boston Flamingos. We have pick-up games with other organized non-league teams, the Road House (because they drink there), the Boston Company (because they work there), or somebody's law-school or business-school section. Our team members threw in five dollars each and had shirts made, a dumb-looking bird standing on one leg with a bat in his teeth against a green background. The Flamingo team is made up of friends. We're not great—no semi-pro or ex-minor leaguers—but we're not bad. We catch about 80 per cent of what's hit to us and hit the ball very well. We win most of the games we play and are proud when we win.

One of our occasional "competitors" is a team with no name whom we have dubbed the Cambridge Persons. The reason we named them the Persons is not only that they are the kind of people who *always* say "person" instead of whatever is called for but because the name suggests accurately enough their own concern to display a trendy, hip quality. The Persons cannot put away their desire for ideological purity at game time, and they make "politics" an obvious feature of their game, seeing so-called political issues in everything they do. Scott, Oliver, Hoch, even Charles Reich would be pleased with their attitude.

The team is co-ed; they have no "discrimination" and no "roles," and as a result positions and batting orders are not established. Occasionally they let one of their dogs (with a name like Che or Mao) "play" a position, and as the Flamingos wait, the game is delayed while Che runs out of left field and the Persons laugh and try to look loose and non-competitive. Some of their players are not bad—ability and good reflexes are hard to hide—but what's missing is a sense of organization born of the desire to compete and to take one's ability seriously. There simply is no team here, no coherence. Each Person does his own thing; they don't throw relays or watch the other players to adjust their movements accordingly.

The Persons are half-hearted about winning and they make little jokes and laugh and skip when a ball is hit over their head. Compared to them, the Flamingos are a winning machine; 28-3, 21-0, are common scores in our games with them. In the end the Persons must be judged, in their own terms, to be insensitive, both to the game and to one another as "players"—the cost, no doubt, of each one's being sensitive to himself exclusively as a Person. What's more interesting, I believe, is the fact that we have more fun than the Persons. We invest more in the game and the game is more of a release for us.

PLAYING sports and watching sports seriously as a fan possess a quality shared by only a very few activities; they are at once a doing and a relief from doing. Sports in this sense does not constitute either an exaggeration or a distortion of our lives but a willing departure from our usual sorts of responsibility with the aim of an eventual return. Charles Reich's ideal in *The Greening of America*—a laughing generation playing football in bell-bottom trousers—is one of sheer aimlessness, of distraction pure and simple, doing nothing. Serious playing and watching, on the other hand, are part of what one may do with one's time while in the business of trying to make sense of things. They are rarely if ever doing nothing, for sports is a way to scorn indifference, and occasionally, indeed, one can even discern in competition those elements of grace, skill, beauty, and courage that mirror the greatest affirmations of human spirit and passion.

Music

Records and Performances

Samuel Lipman

IN AN interview some years ago, Sir Rudolf Bing, the former and by now perhaps even lamented General Manager of the Metropolitan Opera, said that what made great singers different from you and me was that *they* suffered from a throat disease. Of course something like that might be said about performers of every kind; and indeed the idea that the source of art in general resides in disease is a familiar 20th-century attempt to comprehend the nature of artistic creation. Nevertheless Sir Rudolf's quip is not very satisfying, for though Bings come and go, Caruso and Flagstad, thanks to the phonograph, show every sign of remaining forever.

The phonograph was invented as

SAMUEL LIPMAN *is a concert pianist who lives in New York. His article, "Wagner Comes to Broadway," appeared in last month's issue.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

long ago as 1877, but it was not widely used to preserve serious art until 1900. From around this time date the first recordings of Caruso who, more than anyone else, made the phonograph recording into a vehicle for vocal culture and financial success. This conjunction of the particular qualities of Caruso's voice and fame was fortunate, for of all the instruments of music recorded by the acoustic process (the purely mechanical method of recording used until 1925) the voice seemed to fare the least badly. Orchestras and choruses were hopeless tasks, and the piano was not much better. Orchestras, for example, could be recorded only by rescoring so as to substitute brass for string instruments and by altering the remaining string instruments themselves so as to render them capable of more sound, even if that sound was of a degraded quality.

But even the voice on these early recordings seems curiously etherealized, as if one were listening through the wrong end of an aural telescope. The voice is miniaturized, hollow, restricted in volume, dynamic range, and tonal color. The accompaniments do not support the soloists; the piano accompaniments are almost inaudible, and the so-called orchestral accompaniments are a caricature, bearing more resemblance to bad high-school bands than to anything heard at a professional concert. The sonic effect of these records is most often more a mocking than an imitation of reality.

For all this, however, the great singers of the 19th century who lived into the 20th were recorded and thus preserved. We can hear on records Adelina Patti, who made her debut in 1859. We can also hear Lilli Lehmann, who began her career in 1865, and Francesco Tamagno, who was Verdi's first *Otello* in 1887. Thus the phonograph's first achievement was to preserve an older tradition as it was about to die.

But it is with those singers who were in the prime of their careers in the earliest years of this century —Melba, Schumann-Heink, de-Lucia, Battistini, and Plançon— that the phonograph first provides us with hard evidence as to how great singers once sounded at their best. Then comes the mature Caruso, and after him an ever-expanding list of stars and less familiar artists. With all of these, the phonograph is launched upon the kind of full documentation of singing and singers it continues to provide today.

The coming of the electrical process in 1925 both revolutionized the actual sound of records and made possible the recording of large-scale works—complete operas, symphonies, and concerti. Indeed, all of music now became fair game for the microphone. Then, with the advent of radio broadcasting of serious music in the decade before World War II, a valuable supplement was added to the recordings which had formerly been available. These older recordings had all been commercial—that is, they were made almost always under studio rather than live-performance conditions, the artists were paid for their work, and the artists' consent for release was, in theory at least, required. But from the early 30's on there began to appear "private" recordings of live performances taken off the air from radio broadcasts in this country and Europe. These recordings preserved many of the performances of the Metropolitan Opera and Covent Garden, as well as the New York Philharmonic and the NBC Symphony. Sonically inferior but artistically superior, they have achieved a wide circulation among sophisticated collectors, and though perhaps not quite legal to sell, they can be purchased quite readily. In recent years it has also become technologically possible to record performances from inside the opera houses and concert halls themselves on small, highly efficient tape recorders, and these recordings are now widely available as well.

As A result of all this recording activity, we have reached a situation today in which all pieces of any interest have been recorded not just once but many times, and in which the art of almost every performer of any reputation is preserved. Since this is especially the case with singers, anyone interested in the past of singing has an opportunity to enter this past at will and to see in what way it still seems special and valuable. Now, with the recent release in England of an album of vocal excerpts spanning fifty years of recording,* we have been given a convenient chance to do just that.

The singers on the record include such famous names as Caruso, Melba, Chaliapin, Lotte Lehmann, Pinza, and Flagstad; we also get samples of the work of such unfamiliar singers as the two Russians Antonina Nezhdanova and Dmitri Smirnov, the English Peter Dawson, and the French Vanni Marcoux. The record, which was issued to accompany a fascinating book of the same title,† begins with a short excerpt from Verdi's *Otello* recorded by Tamagno in 1903 and ends with Flagstad's moving performance of the *Liebestod* from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* made in 1952 under the direction of the legendary German conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler.

The immediate effect of such a record—and of course this is its purpose—is to concentrate attention on the performances rather than on the music. This must be so if only because the selections are so short and so varied. Four minutes —close to the maximum length of a 78-rpm side—is really not enough time for a listener to become involved in the mood and perceive the structure of what he is hearing. In a concert hall it takes the audience more than the first four minutes to cease being restless; the opening piece on a recital program is often a throwaway, intended only to get everything started. But on this recording of seventeen excerpts we go from singer to singer, from work to work, from composer to composer, from period to period, in no more than the few seconds considered by the producer a decent pause.

The performances are, in general, extraordinary; that is why they were chosen. These singers are like so many racehorses, all winners, and all immortals of the operatic turf. On the evidence of this record alone, it is difficult to talk of

* *The Grand Tradition: Seventy Years of Singing on Record*, HMV-HLM 7026.

† *The Grand Tradition*, by J.B. Steane, Scribners, 628 pp., $25.00.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

changes in vocal style over the half-century covered, for such greatness is always *sui generis*, above and beyond mere trends.

YET even on the exalted level represented by this record, the concentration on performance rather than the music performed turns one's mind away from participation and enjoyment toward detachment and criticism. One cannot help feeling that if all the performances are glorious, all are also flawed. Take the opening excerpt of twelve bars from *Otello* sung by Tamagno: a strong voice—but need he shout so? And de Lucia in a superbly musical and liquid performance of *Ecco ridente* from Rossini's *Barber of Seville*: how close to yodeling his fast ornamentation sounds. Nezhdanova's brilliant performance of the Queen of the Night aria from Mozart's *Magic Flute*: all the high notes in place, the voice of beautiful timbre, the Mozart style superb—but the triplets! Why must she cheat on the triplets, making one note out of each three? How important it suddenly becomes that we can hear these triplets (if not the rest of the aria) superbly sung by the Austro-Hungarian coloratura Maria Ivogün in a recording* made during the 20's? And so it goes, for the whole record.

The lesson here is that all performers, considered solely as performers in business for themselves, have strengths and weaknesses. Some have mainly strengths, and we choose to make them immortal; some have mainly weaknesses, and we choose to ignore them. Because these records are our only way of evaluating the dead, we make such judgments on the basis of a comparison of points, not on the basis of how these performances fit into and fulfill a musical conception. In this regard, it is interesting that the two truly great performances on this record are great not simply because of their singing—would that we had it live now—but precisely because of the musical conceptions they express. These two selections, both excerpts from *Tristan und Isolde*—one a portion of the Love Duet from Act II by Freda Leider and Lauritz Melchior, and the other the *Liebestod* from Act III sung by Kirsten Flagstad—date from 1929 and 1952. Both excerpts have been sung even more gloriously elsewhere, if singing is to be the major criterion. Melchior recorded the Love Duet with Flagstad in 1939,† and Flagstad, younger and more secure vocally, recorded the *Liebestod* in 1935,** shortly after her American debut. But both these stunning examples of vocalism were recorded with no more than competent orchestral direction and support. On the HMV record, on the other hand, the conductors are Albert Coates and Wilhelm Furtwängler. Both are great, though in quite different ways—Coates exciting and Furtwängler wise. It is because of their conducting that these two excerpts achieve what should be the goal of all great singing (or indeed of every kind of great musical performance): the communication of great music, not the mere astonishment and amusement of an audience. A grand tradition in performance can have meaning only as part of a grand tradition in music, for if there is no concentration on great music, not even the greatest performing skill will rise above athleticism.

The testimony of the HMV record is that there has been great singing during all the years of the century. We know from the LP transfers of thousands of old 78's that there have been important changes in vocal styles over the years, changes that have as much to do with the different repertory sung now as with the altered musical conceptions brought about by the wider dissemination of musical scholarship and increased familiarity with the classics. Perhaps much has been lost in the way of individuality of performance; singers are no longer the independent operators they once were, when the whims of a Caruso were operatic law and peaches and ice cream were blessed with the name of Nellie Melba. Much may also have been lost in the way of pure virtuoso technique, because today's repertory and stage direction both require an attention to dramatic presentation which interferes with the kind of concentration on vocal production necessary for pure singing. But much has been gained. Singers now all read music, attend rehearsals, and try to hit the notes as written. What has been lost in personality—some would call it eccentricity—has been replaced by the new seriousness and musicianship required from and provided by singers who now must cope with the intellectual demands of contemporary and near-contemporary scores.

YET however much records may tell us about the great performers of the past and document the changes that have taken place, we must not be misled into viewing music on records as if it were entirely a phenomenon of musical performance. For there is also the phenomenon of records themselves to consider. What is a recording? Is it nothing more than a copy, in the early years poor but now more faithful, of an actual original performance? This has never been true. It was not true when the singers at the turn of the century were made to tailor their performances to the inability of the acoustic process to reproduce their very loud and very soft notes. It is not true today when orchestral seating is especially planned for stereo and quadrophonic reproduction in a way that makes it impossible for the musicians to hear each other as they play. It is still less true when, as now, the real arbiter of the success of a take becomes the producer of the record, not the musicians performing.

Recordings, moreover, have always been selections, meant to capture the "best." Before the advent of the LP, the selection was made by recording in four-minute segments and publishing only the best attempts. Since the introduction of magnetic tape and the LP, the selection has been made by assembling a performance composed of innumerable tiny bits spliced together to give the illusion of error-

---

* *Die Goldene Stimme. Maria Ivogün*, Odeon 0 73 395.

† *Flagstad-Melchoir-Wagner*, RCA VIC-1681.

** *Unforgettable Voices in Unforgotten Performances from the German Operatic Repertoire*, RCA VIC-1455.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

free continuity, a continuity which bears no necessary relationship to any actual performance.

Thus the performer is forced by records into competing with what he had thought was only an imitation of himself. He must strive to be as error-free in live performance as artists seem to be on spliced tapes; he must capture in the difficult conditions of public exposure the serenity and control provided by ideal recording conditions. If he is a singer, his natural voice must be as big as an amplified voice. What is done to enhance performances on records by electronic means he must do in live performance for himself. In a recording, an artist can freely expend energy at the beginning of a work, knowing as he does that a possibly taxing finale can be left for another session; in performance an artist must at all times husband his resources. The artist's problem in performance becomes not only to communicate the music but even more to live up to the illusion in his own mind of the perfection of a recording. The artist becomes an imitator of the record; concerts, as they have been for many years in the pop world, become mere pendants of the marketing of records, done in order to make publicity and money.

Indeed, the live concert, no less than the live artist, is in trouble. The competition of records is one of the main causes of the decline of interest in concerts. Another is that concerts are increasingly expensive to put on; the current financial plight of the Metropolitan Opera is a matter of public record. While attendance at performances has slipped, recordings have become the preferred medium of listening for many music lovers. And some important performing artists—notably Glenn Gould—have forsaken the stage for the recording.

DOES it matter that the future of live performance seems bleak? Is it important that recordings are replacing concerts? Concerts have had a long tradition, more than two hundred years in something approaching the form in which we know them today. But music itself has an even longer tradition, and might be expected to survive even the disappearance of concerts. One must not confuse music with its manifestations; first must come the music, then the medium through which the music may be heard. The days are gone when listening to music was confined to what could be heard at professional performances, or in the home essayed by amateurs. Records are a fact of our musical life, and we have much to thank them for, including the wide availability of great music.

But that does not mean we must accept the limitations which are now characteristic of what we hear on records. What a great live performance has that no recording can have (though private recordings of uncorrected actual performances come closer than carefully produced commercial records) is that indefinable sense of risk, of integration under stress, of impetus and progression. Because this aspect of performance is indefinable, because it belongs to the contingent and the unique rather than to the plannable and the repeatable which is the true *métier* of craftsmanship and technology, it is readily sacrificed in favor of the more palpable virtues of records.

But if we are no longer willing to tolerate, because of the example of recorded performances, the kind of sloppiness which was endemic on the concert and opera stage years ago, we must no longer tolerate the fragmented, musically anemic performances so frequent on records today. What must be done is to ask of records fulfillment of the same high musical standards as are applied to live performances. The phonograph recording is a miraculous device which must be required to assist, not obscure, the immediacy of great music.

Fiction

Why Potok is Popular

Daphne Merkin

"THE readiness is all": after the countless portrayals in American fiction of wandering and assimilated Jews—from Malamud's S. Levin to Bellow's Moses Herzog to Roth's Alexander Portnoy—the literary public, at least a large and enthusiastic segment of it, would seem to be ready for Chaim Potok's version of the American Jew—one who has never left the traditional religious community. Potok's latest exploration of the world of Orthodox Judaism is *In the Beginning**; his fourth novel and an all-but-negligible variation on the theme of his first three (*The Chosen, The Promise,* and *My Name is Asher Lev*), it is also his fourth best-seller, and it, too, like the first three, has been treated with respect, if not acclaim, by the critics.

What Potok's main theme consists of exactly is difficult to say. All his books center on the conflict between the religious life and the life of the imagination, but it is certain that his books are not bought—

DAPHNE MERKIN, *a recent graduate of Barnard, is a young writer who lives in New York. This is her first published article.*

* Knopf, 454 pp., $8.95.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

much less remembered—for the quality of their author's metaphysical speculations. A better clue to his popularity lies perhaps in the fortuitous coinciding of timing and a talent, howsoever meager, that is capable of rising to an occasion it has suddenly come upon. That occasion is the rediscovery, in the culture at large and among Jews in particular, of "ethnic consciousness," and Potok has put this rising awareness to profitable use, spinning out tales of unassimilated "people of the book" to the delight of the many assimilated Jews who read him.

It is understandable enough: after Portnoy and his alarming fantasies, who would not be ready to gather Potok's resuscitated ghetto Jews, with their delicate feelings and righteous habits, into his arms? In each successive novel, Potok has imparted freshness to an image of Jews as otherworldly wraiths, innocent, devoutly principled, without so much as a touch of the cosmopolitan *angst* that afflicts so many of their fictional (and real-life) brothers. Potok's figures still live in exclusively Jewish worlds; their energy is spent on issues most contemporary Jews have abandoned, together with separate dishes for meat and dairy foods. And this perhaps suggests yet another reason for Potok's popularity: laden as his works are with the colorful details of Orthodox ritual and with gobbets of Jewish history and folklore, they perform a pedagogical function in a relatively painless way, informing Jews about their heritage and making them feel nostalgically good about it at the same time.

That Potok's books are badly written seems to bother no one. *In the Beginning* was reviewed glowingly in the New York *Times Book Review*, and was treated in what can only be called a kindly fashion by the *New Yorker*: clearly Potok's work is not accorded the normal critical reception, but is handled in the way matters of faith are handled by the non-religious in a carefully tolerant age, with kid gloves (or the way ethnic theater, for example, is reviewed in the daily press, with critical judgment suspended). Aesthetically damning as this slackened attitude may be, it is in its own way just, for Potok writes more as a rabbi (which in fact he is) than as a novelist, inspired by the responsibilities of the pulpit rather than the license of the muse. Potok seems to conceive of his novels as instruction or even initiation into such perplexing issues as the conditions for religious belief in a faithless time—issues rarely if ever dealt with in contemporary fiction. Unlike more consequential Jewish writers whose heritage colors but does not dictate to their material, Potok writes both *as* a Jew and *because* he is a Jew: one aspect validates the other. So Potok feels himself duty bound to present Orthodox Judaism in the best possible light: not as a mere moral code or a set of historical imperatives tacked on to the everyday business of life, which goes on elsewhere, but as a magically powered and all-pervasive essence that somehow affects the very character of that life at its core.

As a novelist, then, Potok has consciously forgone the attempt to write about situations or characters that might stand in for the situation of humanity in general, and has concentrated instead on the particular, writing from an insularly Jewish perspective that denies broader implications. Yet by keeping to his own side of town, to the restricted but fertile Jewish territory of high-toned wrestlings with God and self, he has hit upon both a formula for success and a comfortable frame in which the only limits to artistic achievement are the limits of his own imagination. Unfortunately, as *In the Beginning* demonstrates once again, those limits are rather quickly reached.

In the Beginning is the story of David Lurie. The latest in Potok's line of golden boys, long on brains and short on muscles, David grows up in the Bronx during the years surrounding the Depression. Like Danny Saunders (of *The Chosen* and *The Promise*) and Asher Lev (*My Name is Asher Lev*), David Lurie staggers under the weight of his intellectual gifts. Even as a sickly little boy—he falls out of his mother's arms as an infant, and the true extent of the damage (a deviated septum) goes temporarily undetected—David strains after Truth: "I spent my early life growing a little and being ill a lot . . . I lay in my bed and watched and listened. I turned my long lonely days and nights into nets with which I caught the whispers and sighs and glances and the often barely discernible gestures that are the real message carriers in our noisy world."

David's early years are beset with many misfortunes and few joys. He is plagued by the recurring pain and illness brought on by his untreated injury, and he is victimized by the neighborhood anti-Semite, blond Eddie Kulanski, who hates him—in a phrase suggestive of Potok's chronic aversion to understatement—with a "mindless demonic rage." (David's perceptions are all at this fever pitch: discovering that he will have to stay in bed again, he says, "I looked into the dark cavern of the coming days and shivered with dread.") David is also a sensitive witness to the upheavals in the world at large, which have their repercussions in the Lurie household: the Crash, in which David's immigrant father loses his thriving real-estate business; the ensuing lean years of the Depression which reduce his father's confidence and aggression to bewilderment and sadness; and then the slow recovery of the Lurie family's spiritual and economic resources. Finally, there are the swiftly changing events in Europe, and David's connection to them through his homesick mother's letters to her family left behind, and through his father's involvement with the mysterious "Am Kedoshim Society."

David's happiest moments are those he spends studying Torah with the elegant Mr. Shmuel Bader, whose sophistication is noted each time he appears, fingering a dark-red "cravat." In high-school David meets another influential teacher, Rav Sharfman, one of those hooded-eyed and impassive-faced "rebbes" who crop up in every Potok novel. Sharfman is given to communicating by way of dark, penetrating stares and enigmatic asides: "I have wings enough for only one man." Singling David out as another potentially winged

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

creature, he gently nudges him—cautioning that "a shallow mind is a sin against God"—toward the decision he makes at the book's close (in the face of parental opposition) to pursue his secular studies.

IT IS distressingly easy to catalog the faults of Potok's writing, from the amateurish style to the implausible dialogue to the paper-thin characterizations. David's manner of speech, for example, is insufferably solemn and self-inflating. "It was always exciting to hear new words. It was what I had instead of good friends," he says at one point; or again, "I could not remember when I had last seen my mother laugh. She never laughed. Laughter was as much a stranger to her as sleep was to me." Then there are Potok's precarious lurches into the metaphysical: "Here and there along the path, as we walked its beckoning curves into the heart of the wood, a huge gnarled root showed its dark power as it lay pushing up the earth." Potok combines words with an exasperating lack of imagination, and he has an unerring ear for clichés—"secret pool of sorrow," "fever of excitement." "Dense" seems to be his favorite meaningful adjective; it appears, heralding profundity (as in "a dense hush fell over the synagogue") at least a dozen times.

In the Beginning's peculiar achievement is to render its figures so monochromatically—once someone "murmurs" in this novel he is condemned to murmuring as a permanent style—and to present its tensions so glaringly—"Being born a Jew is the biggest accident of all"—that one can easily skip several pages without loss. In this sense the book is a set-up; it fulfills expectations by setting up types—the frail, flowering prodigy, the suffering withdrawn mother, the tense, irate father—and then proceeds to have them do exactly what we would expect such types to do: the prodigy astounds his teachers with his precocious grasp of textual problems; the mother weeps; and the father loses patience. *In the Beginning* is thoroughly predictable, and as consoling as a glass of tea.

Potok's strength, here as in his earlier books, is his storytelling skill. His panoramic plots feature something for everyone, and the narrative thread weaves in and out of locales and periods with enviable effortlessness. There is no denying that *In the Beginning*, in its own plodding way, is a good read, and this in itself goes far toward excusing the black-and-white moral scheme, the pseudo-profundities, and the spurious bits of homely wisdom in which it abounds.

It does not, however, excuse Potok's misleading and sentimentalized version of Orthodox Judaism, which functions in all of Potok's novels less as a reality than as a symbol. For all its intricately wrought scenes and its wealth of detail, *In the Beginning* does not succeed in capturing the quixotic spirit of observant Judaism; its conception is at once too hallowed and too facile. Thus, emotions in the novel all take place on a spiritual level; no one experiences any primitive appetitive urges. To take one obvious example: Jews are notorious "noshers," yet though the Luries are forever sitting down to Sabbath meals, they eat oddly little—David abstains completely and the others subsist on cups of coffee and left-over boiled chicken. Potok likewise "plays to the grandstands" (to borrow Rav Sharfman's metaphor) by keeping David free of sexual desires throughout high school; he wouldn't recognize temptation if it winked at him from between the pages of his Talmud. Judaism in Potok's world is never simply lived; it is, rather, an intellectual curiosity that is always being examined, questioned, held up to the light, displayed.

In an astute essay originally published in these pages,* Philip Roth once maintained that the real question lurking behind the attacks on him by the rabbinical "establishment" was the defensive one: "What will the *goyim* think?" With Potok, this question would never appear to arise. Yet the attitude toward Judaism in his novels does turn out to be defensive after all, one that implicitly acknowledges the insufficiency of all those quaint rituals and historical ideas to stand on their own and compel the mind. Writing from within a world whose sympathetic spokesman he has become, Potok might have risen to the chance to see that world steadily and whole. That he has failed to do so, that his portrait of Orthodoxy is as carefully selective as it is, may in part be a failure of talent, but it may also be attributable to an unspoken fear of what the *goyim* will think—even though in this case the *"goyim"* happen to be the assimilated Jews who are the majority of his readers. Potok's rendition of Orthodox life is entertaining and informative, but his work does not expand to the dimensions it reaches for, and he has so far not exhibited enough confidence in the viability of his own materials to accord them the rounded and unapologetic treatment they are still waiting to receive.

* "Writing About Jews," December 1963.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books in Review

Military Policy

CAN AMERICA WIN THE NEXT WAR? By DREW MIDDLETON. *Scribners. 271 pp. $8.95.*

Reviewed by JAMES Q. WILSON

IT IS time, once again, to think about the next war. It has been at least ten years since it was possible to have a public discussion of this issue; John F. Kennedy was the last President to lead one. President Johnson became involved in a war which he found hard to defend, President Nixon was preoccupied with getting us out of a war he found hard to explain. The widespread and understandable repugnance to Vietnam has put military policy, except for sporadic debates over the size of the military budget, into the background. But the increased precariousness of Israel and the unknown dimensions of our present and future commitments there and elsewhere make it essential that we think seriously about the kind of war we are prepared to fight.

Such a discussion will not be easy. The Indochina quagmire has left most Americans with no stomach for this kind of debate. And who will lead it is far from clear. During the nation's rearmament in the 1950's and again during the rethinking of our strategic posture in the early 1960's, the principal voices were those of military heroes who defended, in books and speeches, alternative views of what the national interest required—Curtis LeMay, James M. Gavin, Maxwell Taylor, Dwight D. Eisenhower. Vietnam produced no military heroes—in the public eye, at least—and hence no public military spokesman attempting to draw for the future the lessons of that struggle. Inside the service academies and the war colleges, however, the discussion is intense. This country has, after all, probably the largest cadre of young, battle-tested professional military officers and noncoms of any major power in the world today. Many are articulate and well-educated, yet their voices are muted and public attention is elsewhere.

It remains, thus, for public figures, such as James Schlesinger, or journalists, such as Drew Middleton, to speak for them. The Middleton book, though not profound or systematic, is informative, challenging, and sober: an excellent place to begin.

Beginning means moving beyond the abstract and rather empty discussion over the absolute size of the military budget or the alleged machinations of the "military-industrial complex." However much the generals and aircraft manufacturers might wish it otherwise, there is not much evidence that they have been able to dominate decision-making over military-force levels. The defense budget has declined, both as a percentage of the total federal budget and as a percentage of the Gross National Product, steadily since 1968—the peak of our Vietnam involvement. The research-and-development budget has been, in real dollars, more or less flat for many years. Increases in the dollar amount of the military budget have largely been the result of inflation and mandated increases in military pay, not of increases in the size or weaponry of the armed forces. Indeed, if one compares the exponential growth in social expenditures with the stagnant or declining defense expenditures, one would find more evidence of a "welfare-educational complex" than of a military-industrial one.

The periodic congressional disputes over proposed new weapons systems—the ABM, the B-1 bomber, the Trident submarine missile—are important exceptions to the general public indifference to questions of military posture, but valuable as they are, they do not go to the most relevant issues. The ABM, Trident, and the B-1 are primarily strategic weapons, chiefly of significance for what Middleton calls a "Class A war"—an all-out battle between the Soviet Union and the United States—and what most other people call, not quite correctly, the "unthinkable" war. What is far more likely, and in fact has occurred with unhappy regularity, is "Class B wars" (limited though intense engagements fought over the autonomy of an ally, such as South Korea or South Vietnam) or "Class C wars" (low-intensity struggles involving guerrillas, coups d'état, and economic blockades, as in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Lebanon, Portugal, Angola, Nigeria, the Congo, and elsewhere). We have had two major Class B wars and had to confront countless and seemingly endless Class C conflicts. There is little reason to suppose that we will not be drawn into more, however we define our interests.

Our commitments and our military posture with respect to potential B and C conflicts are scarcely discussed publicly at all, even though our experience in these matters is great and our vulnerability to more such experiences is substantial. The military is itself divided, often deeply, along lines formed principally by the prior combat experience of the various advocates. The battleship admirals ruled the navy until World War II; then the aircraft-carrier admirals came to the fore and now they dominate navy planning. But is the carrier hopelessly vulnerable to the sophisticated and extensive Soviet anti-submarine force? If it is not, is a carrier force still necessary for Class B engagements in which Soviet forces are not committed?

Before World War II, the army was dominated by infantry generals; during that war, the tank and airborne commanders rose greatly in prominence owing to their dramatic achievements; during Vietnam, tanks and paratroopers were

JAMES Q. WILSON *is Henry Lee Shattuck Professor of Government at Harvard and the author of, among other works,* Amateur Democrat, Political Organizations, *and* Thinking About Crime.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LITERARY REMAINDERS

ALL HARDCOVER BOOKS

1 SHORT LETTER, LONG FAREWELL
Peter Handke. Translated from the German by Ralph Manheim. This is absolutely first-rate fiction. Frank Kermode has said that Handke, ". . . offers with prodigality the possibility of greatness" (NYRB, May 1975); Richard Gilman rates Handke with Chekhov and Beckett. This haunting novel of alienation demonstrates Handke's theory of the progress of literature as "the gradual removal of unnecessary fictions." Manheim's translation provides the reader with the kind of prose he has come to expect from the finest practitioners of English fiction, relentlessly barraging the reader with arresting turns of phrase. Fascinating. *Pub @ 7.95* **NOW 1.98**

2 THE DOLPHIN (1974 Pulitzer Prize Winner for Poetry)
Robert Lowell. "Our greatest contemporary poet" is how Helen Vendler described Lowell in a recent article discussing *The Dolphin* (Harper's 1/75), and indeed, this Pulitzer Prizewinning collection attests to the power of the poet's vision. Literary, political and personal history are filtered through the alembic of Lowell's masterful sonnets, producing what can easily be called a celebration of our emotional as well as our verbal vernacular. Yeats is the obvious analogy. Lowell's free-associations, at first startling, prove to be thematically unified and possessed of what Stephen Yesner has called "reluctant magnificence". A collection not to be missed. *Pub @ 6.95* **NOW 1.98**

3 THE SATYRICON
Petronius. Translated with an introduction by William Arrowsmith. In this brilliant translation, Arrowsmith recreates *The Satyricon* as a classic of the comic imagination about Romans who were innocent of virtue. Considered by Kenneth Rexroth to be one of the four greatest prose masterpieces of all time. "Professor William Arrowsmith's brilliant new translation at one stroke renders every other version obsolete." — T.L.S. Beautifully printed and bound. **NOW 2.98**

4 THE POETRY OF CATULLUS
Catullus. Translated by C. H. Sisson with the complete Latin text. In this brilliant and acclaimed translation, C. H. Sisson captures the spirit and nuance of the complete works of the great Latin lyricist. "Every generation should read Catullus and in a translation suitable to the period, so I hope Mr. Sisson's will spread far and wide. I prefer his renderings to Horace Gregory's . . . or to Pound's." — Cyril Connolly. Beautifully bound and printed on textured paper. *Pub @ 6.00* **NOW 1.98**

5 GERARD DE NERVAL, SELECTED WRITINGS
Gerard de Nerval. Translated by Geoffrey Wagner. A brilliant translation of Nerval's short prose works "Emilie", "Sylvie", and his famous "Aurelia". Eighty pages of poetry in translation, original texts facing. Wagner's introduction is an informative and insightful discussion of Nerval's psyche and the psyche of the times. *Pub @ 5.95* **NOW 1.98**

6 PUSHKIN THREEFOLD
Alexander Pushkin. Translated by Walter Arndt. "This interesting and ambitious book contains an excellent selection of Pushkin's verse, lyric poems, fairy tales and ballads. It also contains two kinds of translations, one literal . . . facing the original, and one poetic (or metric) . . . Introduction is a fine essay on the problems of translating verse. Pushkin comes through, in this, the most successful Pushkin in English. Highly recommended." — Choice, *Pub @ 12.50* **NOW 2.98**

7 HEARTBREAK TANGO
Manuel Puig. Translated from the Spanish by Suzanne Jill Levine. One of the finest works of contemporary Latin American fiction, *Heartbreak Tango* portrays dreamers absorbed by the Hollywood illusion, who are caught in the reality of small town mediocrity, "The depth of *Heartbreak Tango* is principally achieved through Puig's sensitivity, his ability to identify with his characters yet keep just the right distance from them . . . Puig's first novel *Betrayed By Rita Hayworth* received justified critical acclaim . . . I suspect *Heartbreak Tango* admirably translated by Suzanne Jill Levine, will be even more successful . . . It is compelling, moving, instructive and very funny." — David Gallagher *New York Times Book Review. Pub @ 6.95* **NOW 1.98**

8 EXTERMINATOR
William S. Burroughs. Short stories by the masterful author of *Naked Lunch*. This volume gathers various sorts of exterminators and exterminations. "Burroughs is not only serious in his intent, but he is a writer of great power and artistic integrity engaged in a profoundly meaningful search for true values." — John Ciardi, *Pub @ 6.95* **NOW 1.98**

9 THE FIERCE AND BEAUTIFUL WORLD
Andrei Platonov. Translated from the Russian by Joseph Barnes. Introduction by Yevgeny Yevtushenko. A fabulous novella and several short stories comprise this collection of fiction. "Platonov is a realist as only the Russians can be realists, unsparing and utterly without any literary device except the exact telling detail. The result seems to Western eyes more myth than reality, as Platonov's inner Russia is incredibly strange" — Guy Davenport, Nat'l Rev. *Pub @ 6.95* **NOW 1.98**

10 THE LATIN POETRY OF GEORGE HERBERT: A Bilingual Edition
George Herbert. Translated by J. M. McCloskey and P. R. Murphy. George Herbert is well known as one of the great religious "metaphysical" poets of the seventeenth century. Herbert's Latin verse, translated here for the first time in its entirety, reveals him as a young polemicist and satirist in the 'Musae Responsoriae'. In the 'Passio Discerpta' we find him using an impassioned Baroque style akin to Crashaw's; in the 'Lucus' he employs a metaphysical imagery akin to Donne's. *Pub. Price 5.50* **SPECIAL 1.00**

11 LITTLE
Louis Zukovsky. Zukovsky's first novel. "For those who are fascinated by words . . ." — J. M. Warner; ". . . a pleasure to read . . . its puns, puzzles and word games are genuinely funny." — Sat. Review; ". . . a gnomic and gnomelike amusement." — Robert Fitzgerald. Zukovsky's characters emerge as a series of grotesques, allegorically named a la Pynchon, in this tender and satirical novel about the author's son — a musical prodigy. *Pub @ 5.95* **SPECIAL 1.00**

12 RADICAL SOPHISTICATION: Studies in Contemporary Jewish/American Novelists
Max F. Schulz. Nine novelists: I. B. Singer, Nathaniel West, Bernard Malamud, Norman Mailer, Saul Bellow, E. L. Wallant, Bruce Jay Friedman, Leslie Fiedler and J. D. Salinger are shown here sharing a willingness to accept the world as disorderly, incoherent and absurd. Well written, the study includes a chapter on each novelist, e.g. "Norman Mailer's Divine Comedy," et al. *Pub. Price 8.50* **NOW 1.98**

13 ORWELL'S FICTION
Robert A. Lee. Proposing that Orwell's fiction reveals his political insights in a more fully developed and profound manner than his non-fiction, Professor Lee discusses all six of Orwell's novels and his reminiscences of the Spanish Civil War (Homage to Catalonia), suggesting that the war caused a major shift in Orwell's thinking—his art went from a concern with the relationship of the individual to the society, to a concern with the very possibility of individual existence within the framework of an overwhelming state. *Pub @ 8.50* **NOW 1.98**

14 THE PASSIVE VOICE
Harold Kaplan. An original and interesting interpretation of modern fiction asserting that the pursuance of individual values with a singleness of purpose is what separates modern protagonists from supplemental characters. The author exemplifies his argument in chapters about Flaubert, Joyce, Conrad, Hemingway, Faulkner, etc., and concludes with a fascinating discussion of *King Lear*. *Pub. Price 8.00* **NOW 1.98**

15 WALLACE STEVENS: Art of Uncertainty
Herbert J. Stern. A study of Stevens' poetry, especially from the "Harmonium" period, seeking to analyze his aesthetic, philosophical and literary development. Vascillating instructively between Stevens' poetry and his poetics, Stern sheds some light on the poet's dialogue of self-and-soul. *Pub @ 5.95* **NOW 1.98**

16 THREE AMERICAN MORALISTS: MAILER, BELLOW, TRILLING.
Nathan A. Scott, Jr. In a lively discussion, Scott asserts the two novelists and the late critic to have been the literary voice of the post W.W. II period. *Pub @ 6.95* **NOW 1.98**

17 THE CURIOUS FRAME: SEVEN POEMS IN TEXT AND CONTEXT
John Edward Hardy. Extended discussions of the following poems toward an appreciation of intrinsic (text) and extrinsic (context) factors in the apprehension of poetry in general: Milton's "Lycidas", "Young Waters" Anon., Marvell's "The Coronet", Wordsworth's "The Solitary Reaper", Baudelaire's "Reve Parisien" (French text only; 60 lines), Rilke's "Sonette an Orpheus, I Teil, XX" (German text only), and Yeats "A Prayer for my Daughter". *Pub @ 6.95* **NOW 1.98**

18 ESSAYS IN AMERICAN AND ENGLISH LITERATURE PRESENTED TO BRUCE ROBERT McELDERRY, JR.
Edited by Schulz, Templeman and Metzger. Essays on Melville, Twain, Whitman, H. Adams, Tarkington, T. Wolfe, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Coleridge, Pope and Browning. *Pub. Price 10.00* **NOW 1.98**

19 STUDIES IN SIX 17th CENTURY WRITERS
James Roy King. The theme is how six key seventeenth century literary figures, John Evelyn, Robert Burton, Sir Thomas Browne, Henry Vaughn, Jeremy Taylor and John Milton confronted the revolutionary cultural environment of their time. The radical scientific, technological and theological changes which took place during this period are viewed from the perspectives of the works of the six. *Pub. Price 8.00* **NOW 1.98**

20 SHAFTESBURY'S PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION AND ETHICS: A Study in Enthusiasm
Stanley Grean. The first full-scale study in English of Shaftesbury's influential writings, which found favor with such diverse philosophers as Hume, Leibniz, and Rousseau. Dr. Grean's study stresses the central place assigned to "enthusiasm" in Shaftesbury's vision of the cosmos as ultimately both rational and divine. ". . . an excellent introduction to Shaftesbury." — Alfred Hofstadter, Columbia University. *Pub. Price 8.50* **NOW 1.98**

21 DOSTOYEVSKY, TOLSTOY & NIETZCHE
Lev Shestov. Translated and edited by Bernard Martin and Spencer Roberts. "[Shestov's] interpretations of Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky are more brilliant and suggestive than those of any other commentator, because he sees them under Western as well as Russian eyes, and also with something of the native vision of an Old Testament Prophet." — John Bayley, N.Y.R.B. "[Shestov] tracks down, illuminates, and magnifies the human revolt against the irremediable." — Albert Camus, "The Myth of Sisyphus". *Pub. Price 11.00* **NOW 2.98**

22 THE DIFFICULTY OF BEING CHRISTIAN
Soren Kierkegaard. Edited by Jacques Colette. Trans. by M. McInery and L. Turcotte. Asserting that a true understanding of Kierkegaard's life and philosophy can be reached only through his perseverance of Christian ideals, Collette has here compiled some 225 pages of Kierkegaard's own writing drawn from his collected works, and gives them the unity which illustrates this message. 85 pages of intro. A necessary work regarding this aspect of Kierkegaardian scholarship. *Pub @ 7.95* **NOW 1.98**

23 REASON REVISITED: THE PHILOSOPHY OF KARL JASPERS.
Sebastian Samay. In this thorough and well-written study, Samay provides a clear overview of Jasper's complex and voluminous oeuvre. The emphasis is on Jasper's reconciliation of traditional metaphysical concerns and the non-metaphysical ethos of Existentialism. *Pub @ 10.00* **NOW 1.98**

24 SARTRE: The Radical Conversion
James F. Sheridan, Jr. An interesting look into Sartre's change of philosophy from existentialism as exhibited in *Being and Nothingness* to Marxism as evidenced in *Critique de la Raison Dialectique*. Especially noteworthy in view of Sartre's most recent work (*Between Existentialism and Marxism.*) *Pub @ 7.50* **NOW 1.98**

25 JEAN PAUL SARTRE: HIS PHILOSOPHY
Rene Lafarge. Translated by Marino Smyth-Kok. The influential Sartrian concepts of anguish, the absurd and bad faith emerge in their original contexts as Lafarge traces Sartre's thought through his philosophical and literary works. Includes a fine discussion of *Nausea*. *Pub @ 6.50* **NOW 1.98**

26 PHILOSOPHICAL TRENDS IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD
Michele Federico Sciacca. Trans. from the Italian by A. Salerno. This comprehensive text of contemporary philosophy offers detailed analyses of historicism, relativism, phenomenology, existentialism, idealism, realism and naturalism in the works of Nietzche, Bergson, Unanumo, Kierkegaard, Gasset, Heidegger, Sartre, Dostoyevsky, Marx, et al. Includes many Latin American philosophers. A complete guide to comparative contemporary philosophy. *Pub @ 15.00* **NOW 3.98**

27 WITTGENSTEIN AND MODERN PHILOSOPHY
Justus Hartnack. Translated by Maurice Cranston. An exposition of Ludwig Wittgenstein's major writings, concentrating on his theories of language and thought, and the *inherent relationship between them. Pub @ 6.95* **SPECIAL 1.00**

28 *CONTEMPORARY SPANISH PHILOSOPHY: AN ANTHOLOGY* translated with an introduction by A. Robert Caponigri. The volume's purpose is to offer the English reading public a sampling of current Spanish Philosophical thought on a variety of subjects ranging from history to metaphysics, totalitarianism to being. A variegated and informative anthology. *Pub @ 7.95* **NOW 1.98**

29 PHILOSOPHY AND CYBERNETICS
Frederic J. Crosson and Kenneth M. Sayre, editors. This series of essays was delivered to "The Philosophic Institute for Artificial Intelligence at the University of Notre Dame", in an effort to define, analyze and predict the relationship between human and computer intelligence. The contributors are primarily Professors of Philosophy, Mathematics and Computer Science. Will the cultivated cogito or the binary barbarian win out in the end? *Pub @ 8.95* **NOW 1.98**

30 CONTRARIES
Michael Hamburger. Fine translator, essayist and poet, Michael Hamburger, presents what might easily be considered a central perception of modern German literature in this diverse and coherent collection of essays. The following artists are informatively discussed: Holderlin, Novalis, Kleist, Heine, Buchner, Neitzche, Mann, et al. *Pub @ 8.95* **NOW 1.98**

MAIL TO:

Greenwich Avenue Bookstore

200 PARK AVE. SOUTH
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10003

Order by book number or title. Please include $1.00 for postage and handling with each order. All books are unconditionally guaranteed. N.Y. State residents add appropriate sales tax.

Purchases of $10 or more may be charged to Bankamericard, Master Charge, or American Express. Please supply all information printed on your card.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of little importance and the combat helicopter became the dominant mode of troop deployment. But all the elements—soldiers, tanks, paratroopers, helicopters—operated during World War II and Vietnam under the shield of invincible air superiority.

That can no longer be taken for granted. In a Class A war in Europe we could not count on air superiority; indeed, we would be fortunate if we did not have to concede the air entirely to the Soviets. In the Middle East, control of the air is threatened less, for example, by the Syrian air force than by the extensive, and during the Yom Kippur war, successful use of surface-to-air missiles that made life for the fighter-bombers quite difficult. Those same weapons, in addition to the existence of powerful air forces in the area, render the prospects of helicopter assaults far bleaker than they were in Vietnam. In rugged terrain, a helicopter, like a tank, can hide "in the nap of the earth," partially neutralizing rival aircraft and anti-aircraft weapons. But in the deserts of the Middle East, the earth has no nap. The skilled commanders of the air-mobile divisions who learned their trade in Vietnam may not be ready for the kind of warfare to be encountered in the Sinai.

The Yom Kippur war was also the first major revelation of the power of "smart" weapons—guided weapons operated by soldiers, pilots, and tank crews that were so accurate and devastating that one shot often meant one kill. In World War II, combat was extremely inefficient: the proportion of bullets and bombs that accurately found their mark was infinitesimal. Indeed, a major training problem for combat commanders was to induce their soldiers to shoot often enough to increase the probability that they would eventually hit something. Combat can now be more precise, more deadly, and thus more costly. Middleton estimates that in only sixteen days of fighting, the Israelis, Egyptians, and Syrians destroyed about $3.5 billion worth of arms and supplies as a result, in large part, of the increased accuracy and hitting power of modern weapons.

These facts change importantly the problem of battlefield resupply. The staggering rate at which materiel will be consumed means that much more has to be immediately available at or very near the battlefield and that a large airlift capacity must exist for quickly resupplying the war theater. During the Yom Kippur war, the C-5 aircraft—previously detested by critics of the Pentagon because of the great cost overruns encountered in its development—carried 74 tons of payload per plane per trip, stopping to refuel in the Azores. It proved invaluable, but there are only four squadrons of C-5's in the United States air force. If for political reasons we are denied the use of the Azores (we currently retain some access but the issue remains in doubt), the C-5's could still make it to Israel flying nonstop, but their payloads would be cut by more than half. In-flight refueling is a possibility, but our total long-range airlift capability remains dangerously low, given the magnitude of our overseas commitments.

Middleton reviews these and many other aspects of American and Soviet military doctrine and preparedness. Though the longtime military correspondent of the New York *Times*, he is by no means a mere enthusiast for the armed forces. He is critical of many current practices: the location of the Seventh Army in Europe (he believes it should be there, but north of its present location); the heavy reliance on large carriers; the lack of attention to reducing the vulnerability of tanks to counterattacks; and the continued belief of the USAF in the capacity of air power despite the evidence of Israel, Korea, and Vietnam that air power, while often important in close tactical support of infantry, has been able to do relatively little to interdict supply flows, seal off the battlefield, or destroy the enemy's will to fight.

Nor has he produced a scare story about the awesomeness of Soviet military might. The Russians, though more fully mobilized than we, have problems as well. The maneuverability of their navy is limited by its need to move into the Atlantic and Mediterranean oceans by way of narrow and vulnerable passages around the North Cape and through the Dardanelles. The Soviets in Europe must rely on their satellite nations whose will to fight and whole loyalty are open to serious doubt. Their military-transport system in Europe is heavily dependent on rail movement which is inflexible and easily congested. Unit for unit, Soviet air power has not proved of the same quality as the American. Perhaps most important, the Soviets have not had any serious combat experience since World War II, while their American rivals have gone through two major wars and many skirmishes. Middleton quotes a Soviet colonel as saying that "you are two wars ahead of us."

But the American weaknesses are even more obvious. NATO is in disarray. When asked by Middleton on whom the United States could count in Europe, a senior American NATO commander replied, "The British, of course, and the Germans." The "of course" implies not only a salute to well-established British valor but also the admission of a doubt about how far the valor would extend. English soldiers are superb, but they are few in number and supported by an economy that seems on the verge of collapse. Furthermore, Western Europe cares nothing for the American commitment to Israel or, more accurately, fears that it will complicate efforts to do business with the Arabs—at any price. Turkey, Greece, Spain, and Portugal are all uncertain NATO allies.

These facts are important even if there is never a Soviet attack on Western Europe. To defend our interests in the Middle East, we must be able to base troops in and around the Mediterranean. The C-5 can resupply forces in a short war but not in a long one. And our Mediterranean position is perilous. Even the C-5, it would appear, will not be allowed to land on the airfields of our European "allies" if its destination is Tel Aviv and if the Arabs object.

MIDDLETON's book is not simply or even mainly about our military commitments to and preparedness

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for a war in the Middle East. I select for special attention his comments on these matters because, to me, we are more deeply, though ambiguously, engaged in that theater than in any other save Western Europe. And whereas the threat of war in Europe is currently small, the threat in the Middle East is great. But I emphasize the Middle East for other reasons as well. Were it not for the importance and vulnerability of Israel, the intellectual and political attack on the American military that reached its peak toward the end of the Vietnam war would be more intense than is now the case with, in my opinion, seriously adverse effects.

The issue is not whether Vietnam and Israel are comparable cases, or whether the critics of Vietnam have been inconsistent in attacking our commitment in the former case and defending it in the latter. History rarely offers precisely analogous cases and people are entitled to reach different judgments about comparable events. The issue is more fundamental. Military power is hard to create, easy to dissipate. That power consists not only of personnel and equipment (which take time and effort to assemble) but of public acceptance of the need for that power and public willingness to see it employed when vital interests are at stake. This last, the political and psychological component of military power, is the most fragile and is currently the least dependable of factors.

VIETNAM did not cripple the men and materiel of the armed forces, though its aftermath did produce precipitous reductions in their strength. What it did produce was, in Middleton's words, a rich democracy "whose people are disillusioned by their most recent experience in war and whose leaders hesitate, because of political expediency, to explain the magnitude of the threat to the country." No one can be confident that we have any longer the will to support our foreign policy with military force. If we do not, then we do not have a foreign policy.

And though it is entirely proper for there to be serious debates over the wisdom of our commitments in Southeast Asia, Israel, Europe, and elsewhere, we should not implement whatever reservations we may have by weakening our military power unless we are to conclude that we have no national interests at all, not even in our own survival. The existence of military force has not caused us to enter wars; reducing that force will not make it less likely that we will have to fight them.

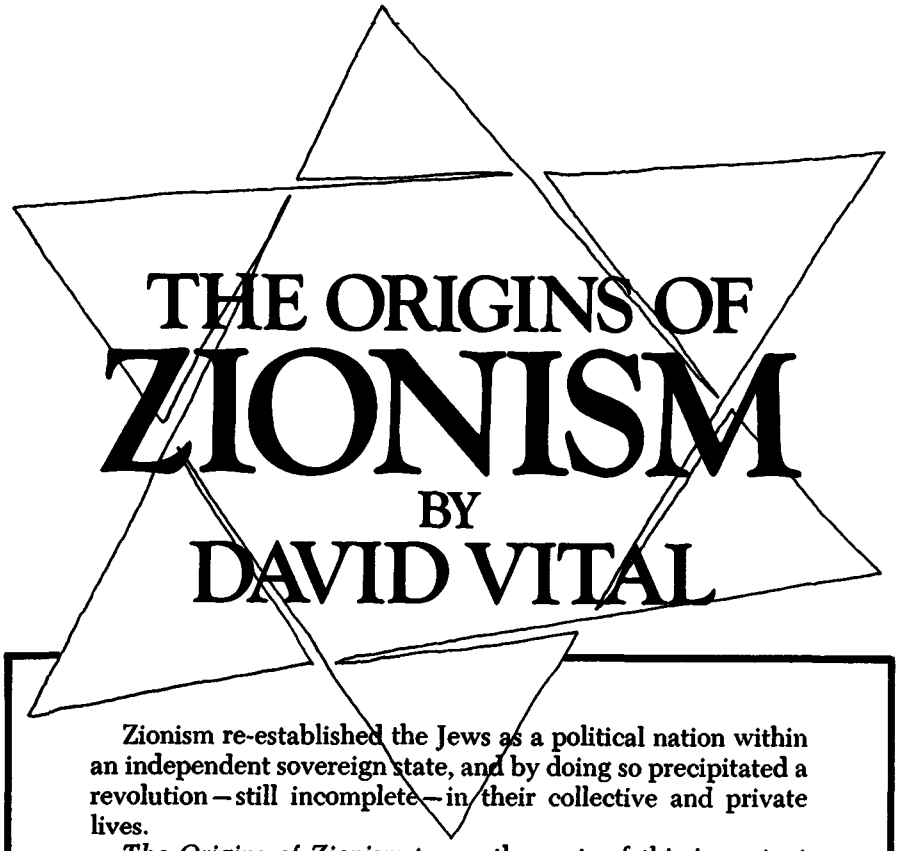
Global Pluralism

IDOLS OF THE TRIBE. By HAROLD R. ISAACS. *Harper & Row. 242 pp. $10.95.*

Reviewed by DIANE RAVITCH

IN 1915, at the height of a wartime mood of patriotism in this country, when Americanization

DIANE RAVITCH *is the author of* The Great School Wars.



Zionism re-established the Jews as a political nation within an independent sovereign state, and by doing so precipitated a revolution—still incomplete—in their collective and private lives.

The Origins of Zionism traces the roots of this important movement from its sources in Jewish tradition, in the moods of the time, and above all, in the disastrous condition of East European Jewry in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Author David Vital describes the formation of the purposes and strategies of the early Zionists and the scope and nature of the obstacles that confronted them. His account focuses on the crucial formative period from the onset of the great East-West migration of European Jews in 1881 to the first World Congress of Zionists in 1897, which marked the emergence of Zionism as an organized political force.

The author has drawn fully on relevant Hebrew, Yiddish, Russian, German, French and English sources (many of them unpublished) to provide the most comprehensive and detailed history of the beginnings of Zionism yet attempted.

1975 416 pp.; 8 plates; maps $22.00

Available from your bookstore, or from
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
200 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CENTER FOR URBAN POLICY RESEARCH

THE COST OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION: REGULATING HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN THE COASTAL ZONE

Dan K. Richardson

This new monograph graphically presents the cost of all regulatory requirements for housing developments in an environmentally sensitive area—the Coastal Zone. The author evaluates the impact of a land use permit system—instituted by a state agency in compliance with federal environmental guidelines—on housing costs and local regulatory procedures. The experience described here, based on a detailed analysis of 21 single and multifamily developments, is directly applicable to all states within the Coastal Zone and wherever environmental regulations are part of the development process.

Softcover, 250 pp., $10

SOLID WASTE PLANNING IN METROPOLITAN AREAS

Michael Greenberg and others

Solid waste is one of the few untapped resources available to our cities. In this definitive monograph, the authors use a mathematical model of cost efficiency to explore the potential of solid waste to increase development areas through land fill, to yield essential materials through recycling, and to provide inexpensive fuel supplies through incineration and pyrolysis.

Softcover, 180 pp., $10

WATER SUPPLY PLANNING: A CASE STUDY AND SYSTEMS ANALYSIS

Michael R. Greenberg and Robert M. Hordon

This new case study, focusing on the provision of an adequate public water supply, raises key issues of environmental planning: the development of new resources, the preservation of existing supplies, and the most beneficial management of both old and new resources. The authors have skillfully placed these considerations within the context of political reality—the jurisdictional fragmentation and obstacles to regionalism so common in metropolitan areas today. Using New Jersey as a data base, this study examines the current status of water supply planning and develops a mathematical optimization model to test alternative planning strategies.

Softcover, 180 pp., $10

NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION AND REHABILITATION

David Listokin and Peter Morris

Policy-makers are now realizing that we can no more afford to squander our housing resources than our natural resources—increasingly they are relying on neighborhood preservation and rehabilitation programs to make the best use of existing housing stocks. This new step-by-step guide to the intricacies of the rehabilitation process gives special attention to financing methods, tax considerations, construction, and management. It also evaluates key on-going efforts and policy alternatives. A valuable overview of a strategy that may provide new investment avenues in the housing industry and new vitality in city and suburb.

Hardcover, 400 pp., $15

URBAN HOMESTEADING

James W. Hughes and Kenneth D. Bleakly, Jr.

Urban homesteading: Can it work? Is there real potential in the program? This in-depth analysis of urban homesteading programs matches operational reality with the goals that have been set. The authors base findings on a thorough examination of the setting, institutional framework, and mechanics of homesteading programs in four case studies: Baltimore, Md.; Wilmington, Del.; Philadelphia, Pa.; and Newark, N.J. The most successful program features are blended into practical policy recommendations. An indispensable guide for policy-makers, prospective homesteaders, and concerned citizens.

Hardcover, 296 pp., $12.95.

FAIR SHARE HOUSING ALLOCATION

David Listokin

Many courts and state and local governments have turned to "fair share" plans to determine the equitable distribution of housing in a region according to such criteria as broadening the socioeconomic mix of communities and protecting the environment. This monograph examines the emerging fair share strategy, discusses its theoretical impact, and analyzes its track record to date. Specific examples and legislative alternatives are examined in detail.

Softcover, 180 pp., $8

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS FROM THE CENTER FOR URBAN POLICY RESEARCH 76

Here is a sampling of new books from the Center for Urban Policy Research. Over two dozen other books have been published by the Center, dealing with environmental impact review, future land use patterns, growth control, housing development, municipal costs and revenues, residential abandonment, and a range of other timely topics. For a complete listing of the Center's publications, check the coupon below.

POST-INDUSTRIAL AMERICA: METROPOLITAN DECLINE AND INTER-REGIONAL JOB SHIFTS

Edited by George Sternlieb and James W. Hughes

Economic and demographic shifts between cities and between regions—now manifested in the stagnation or decline of America's oldest industrial areas—pose consequences more far-reaching than the shifts from city to suburb. This original collection of invited essays examines the reasons behind the shifting focus of development and begins to mold policy in regard to a number of vexing issues: jobs, labor force characteristics, municipal revenues and expenditures, land use, housing, tax delinquency and abandonment, and the struggle for equality. A unique summary of hitherto unpublished census data defines the parameters of change. Among the contributors are:

Vincent Barabba — Brian Berry
Wilbur Thompson — Nathan Glazer
Thomas Muller — Roger Starr
John F. Kain

Hardcover, 200 pp., $12.95

RENT CONTROL: CONCEPTS, REALITIES, AND MECHANISMS

Monica Lett

The resurgence of interest in rent control has generated public controversy over key questions: Is rent control a viable way to deal with the problems of housing shortages and inflationary costs? Under what circumstances? What methods of regulation are most appropriate and effective in a range of local housing conditions?

This comprehensive handbook provides essential information for the on-going debate: a careful analysis of historical precedents; an overview of the conceptual issues, including the benefits, disadvantages, and broader economic consequences of rent control; and an in-depth study of the realities of implementing legislation and operating a rent control system. Empirical evidence from three case studies—Boston, New York, and Fort Lee, New Jersey—is combined with summary data from over 100 other jurisdictions to represent the range of rent control mechanisms.

Hardcover, 300 pp., $15

FOR ADULTS ONLY: RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

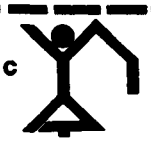
Katherine M. Heintz

Do retirement villages attract households which place significant social service demands on the municipality? Do the elderly in such developments isolate themselves from the community at large? Do they vote as a bloc to defeat local school bond referendums and similar measures which may be in the interest of the larger community?

This ground-breaking study addresses the key arguments that have surrounded this new form of planned development, the retirement community. Based on a wide range of empirical data, the author develops a profile of the residents now living in retirement communities, exposing many pervasive myths about the elderly. This hard-hitting analysis of the dollars-and-cents realities of service costs and voting behavior of the elderly is essential to understand a fast-growing element of our society.

Hardcover, 300 pp., $15

The Center for Urban Policy Research
Rutgers University/Building 4051-Kilmer Campus C
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903



☐ The Cost of Environmental Protection, 10.00
☐ Fair Share Housing Allocation, 8.00
☐ For Adults Only: Retirement Communities, 15.00
☐ Neighborhood Preservation and Rehabilitation, 15.00
☐ Post-Industrial America, 12.95
☐ Rent Control, 15.00
☐ Solid Waste Planning, 10.00
☐ Urban Homesteading, 12.95
☐ Water Supply Planning, 10.00

☐ Check here for free catalog.

I enclose a check for_____made payable to Rutgers University. (New Jersey residents add 5 percent sales tax.)

Name:_____

Address:_____

City:_____

State:_____ **Zip:**_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

programs were being undertaken by government and private agencies alike, the late Horace Kallen published an article criticizing the prevailing ideology of assimilationism and advocating in its stead the model of cultural pluralism. Today, Kallen's radical suggestion of 1915 has become the conventional wisdom. Assimilation is a dirty word, and cultural pluralism is the order of the day. Black is beautiful, and so is brown, yellow, and red. In any stationery store one can find lapel buttons reading "Kiss me, I'm Irish," or ". . . Polish," or ". . . Italian." And the pop-cult of ethnicity is merely an amplification of the pluralist vogue in the academic world. It would be difficult to find a work of scholarship on contemporary American society which did not pay obeisance to pluralism.

The limitations and superficiality of our understanding of this complicated subject become clear on reading Harold R. Isaacs's *Idols of the Tribe*. Isaacs explores the interrelationship of group identity and political change from an international perspective, and, in doing so, breaks free of the common tendency to reduce the discussion to oversimplified extremes.

The function of basic group identity, writes Isaacs, is to supply the individual with two key ingredients: his sense of belonging and the quality of his self-esteem. These two needs are universal and timeless. The history of his group links the individual to past and future, and permits him to participate in a shared experience:

> It assures him, as he profoundly needs to be assured, that he comes from somewhere and is going somewhere, that when he dies, it is not the end, that he is not alone. He is connected to others alive and dead by all the threads that connect what they share through parentage, family, kin, extending in time to a shared ancestry, shared antecedents, shared beliefs, imagined or historic experience. . . . These linkages help make tolerable the individual existence that is otherwise intolerably bounded by its own fragile aloneness, its own birth, and its own death.

This need for roots causes families to seek a genealogy, nations to establish their heroes, and religions to celebrate their special origins.

The deep and powerful need to belong to a group is expressed in half-a-dozen different and overlapping ways: body, name, language, history and origin, religion, and nationality. Isaacs's investigation of the varieties of group identity around the world is fascinating, as he moves easily across nations, across time, across cultures, delineating the manifold ways in which people have defined their links to each other and at the same time made themselves distinct from all others.

Not, however, that a separate group identity is always a welcome thing for an individual; sometimes, indeed, it is a badge of shame inherited at birth. The eighty million Untouchables of India, for example, are locked into their lowly status on four different counts: their bodies, usually darker than those of higher castes, are considered unclean; their name, whether "Untouchable" or some euphemism designed to take its place, brands them as outcasts; their Hindu religion decrees their subjection; and their history is one of thousands of years of submission to fate. The best they can hope for is to "pass," to escape the burden of group identity.

Political change—the collapse of old empires, the distintegration of traditional class structures, the pressure of modernization and industrialization—has hastened the fragmentation of established society. Trouble has arisen when different groups vie for the same piece of territory, or are thrown together into the same nation, or when one group feels it must make the world pure by wiping out some other group. Isaacs sees a painful paradox:

> . . . the more global our science and technology, the more tribal our politics; the more universal our system of communications, the less we know what to communicate. . . . In the face of an ever more urgent need to pool the world's resources and its powers, human society is splitting itself into smaller and smaller fragments.

Isaacs does not say whether this ongoing fragmentation is good or bad; just that it is so. But to those who hail the rise of particularism, Isaacs has words of caution: more than 10 million people have died since 1945 in ethnic-cultural clashes.

> It is a somber catalogue: mutual massacring of Hindus and Muslims in India; tribal civil wars in Nigeria, the Congo, Chad, Sudan; Indians killing Nagas in northeastern Assam; Malays killing each other in Burundi; Catholics and Protestants killing each other in Ulster; Turks and Greeks in Cyprus; Kurds and Iraqis in Iran. . . .

The list goes on and on, including the half-million Sudanese blacks killed by Sudanese Arabs and most recently the devastation of Lebanon by the fighting between Christians and Muslims.

Despite recurring utopian hopes for a seamless world order, then, for a universal brotherhood or family of man, group differences refuse to fade away. "Our tribal separatenesses are here to stay," as Isaacs says, and they are not an unmitigated blessing. They may be a source of art and a boon to the human spirit, they may act as a stay against the homogenizing processes of modernization; but "with all the beauty goes all the blood."

For Americans, one comfort to be drawn from the pages of Isaacs's book is the awareness that present-day American intergroup conflict is comparatively benign. While religions and races and cultures slaughter each other in various parts of the globe, in the United States group disagreements are likely to be expressed in seminars, encounter meetings, ecumenical conferences, and television talk shows. Indeed, if in the past Americans used to worry that their peculiar multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and multi-religious heritage might render impossible the task of forming a single American nation, the current vogueishness of "ethnicity" may represent an implicit acknowledgment that the American identity is now so secure that it is beyond internal jeopardy; the ritualistic celebration of distinctiveness thus

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

becomes possible because distinctiveness itself is no longer as threatening as it once was.

Obviously, we must have our differences. How can we learn to live together without seeking to crush those who are different? Isaacs poses the question but does not answer it, declining to enter into prescription and policy. Nor does he tell us which kinds of pluralistic societies work well, and what sorts of accommodations are necessary for heterogeneous groups to live together peaceably. We are left by Isaacs with paradoxes and dilemmas, whose resolution "remains to be seen." Still, such disappointments aside, Isaacs's survey of global pluralism is enormously helpful in broadening our perspective, and should be required reading for anyone who cares about the shape of ethnicity in America.

Poet of Exile

SPEECH-GRILLE AND SELECTED POEMS. By PAUL CELAN. Translated by JOACHIM NEUGROSCHEL. *Dutton. 225 pp. $7.95.*

SELECTED POEMS. By PAUL CELAN. Translated by MICHAEL HAMBURGER and CHRISTOPHER MIDDLETON. *Penguin. 108 pp. 30P.*

Paul Celan. By JERRY GLENN. *Twayne. 174 pp. $8.50.*

Reviewed by PAUL AUSTER

A JEW, born in Rumania, who wrote in German and lived in France. Victim of World War II, survivor of the death camps, suicide before he was fifty. Paul Celan was a poet of exile, an outsider even to the language of his own poems, and if his life was exemplary in its pain, a paradigm of the destruction and dislocation of mid-century Europe, his poetry is defiantly idiosyncratic. In Germany, he is considered the equal of Rilke and Trakl, the heir of Hölderlin's metaphysical lyricism; elsewhere his work is held in similar esteem, prompting statements such as George Steiner's recent remark that Celan is "almost certainly the major European poet of the period after 1945." At the same time, Celan is an exceedingly difficult poet, both dense and obscure; he demands so much of a reader, and in his later work his utterances are so gnomic, that it is nearly impossible to take him in at first reading. Nevertheless, his work is immediately captivating. Fiercely intelligent, propelled by an almost dizzying linguistic force, Celan's poems seem to explode on the page, and encountering him for the first time is a memorable event.

Czernovitz, Bukovina, where Celan was born as Paul Anczel in 1920, was a multi-lingual area that had once been part of the Hapsburg Empire. In 1940, after the Hitler-Stalin pact, it was annexed by the Soviet Union, in the following year occupied by Nazi troops, and in 1943 retaken by the Russians. Celan's parents were deported to a concentration camp in 1942 and did not return; Celan, who managed to escape, was put in a labor camp until December 1943. In 1945 he went to Bucharest, where he worked as a translator and publisher's reader, then moved to Vienna in 1947, and finally, in 1948, settled permanently in Paris, where he married and became a teacher of German literature at the Ecole Normale Supérieure. His output comprises seven books of poetry and translations of more than two dozen foreign poets.

Celan came to poetry rather late, and his first book was not published until he was almost thirty. All his work, therefore, was written in the shadows of the Holocaust, and his poems are everywhere informed by its memory. The unspeakable yields a poetry that continually threatens to overwhelm the limits of what can be spoken. For Celan forgot nothing, forgave nothing; the death of his parents and his own experiences during the war are the recurrent and obsessive themes that run through all his books. Even after the war, his life remained an unstable one, and he suffered acutely from feelings of persecution which led to severe breakdowns in his later years, and eventually to his suicide in April 1970, when he drowned himself in the Seine.

"Death-Fugue" (*Todesfuge*) is probably not Celan's best poem, but it is unquestionably his most celebrated poem, and it is the work that made his reputation. Coming as it did in the late 40's only a few years after the end of the war —and in striking contradiction to Theodor Adorno's rather fatuous remark about the "barbarity" of writing poems after Auschwitz— "Death-Fugue" had a considerable impact among German readers, both for its direct mention of the concentration camps and for the terrible beauty of its form. The poem is literally a fugue composed of words, and the incessant, rhythmical repetitions and variations of phrases evoke a nightmare more devastating than any forthright description could. Covering slightly less than two pages, it begins and ends with the following stanzas:

Black milk of dawn we drink it at dusk
we drink it at noon and at daybreak we drink it at night
we drink and we drink
we are digging a grave in the air there's room for us all
A man lives in the house he plays with the serpents he writes
he writes when it darkens to Germany your golden hair Margarete
he writes it and steps outside and the stars all aglisten he whistles for his hounds
he whistles for his Jews he has them dig a grave in the earth
he commands us to play for the dance

* * *

Black milk of dawn we drink you at night
we drink you at noon death is a master from Germany
we drink you at dusk and at daybreak we drink and we drink you
death is a master from Germany his eye is blue
he shoots you with bullets of lead his aim is true
a man lives in the house your golden hair Margarete
he sets his hounds on us he gives us a grave in the air
he plays with the serpent and dreams death is a master from Germany

your golden hair Margarete
your ashen hair Shulamite
(trans. by Joachim Neugroschel)

PAUL AUSTER *is the author of a volume of poetry,* Unearth, *and translator of* Fits and Starts: Selected Poems of Jacques Dupin.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In spite of the poem's great control and the formal sublimation of an almost impossibly emotional theme, "Death-Fugue" is one of Celan's most explicit works. In the 60's, he turned against it, refusing permission to have it reprinted in anthologies because he felt that his poetry had progressed to a stage where "Death-Fugue" now seemed too obvious and superficially realistic. With this in mind, however, one does discover in the poem elements common to much of Celan's work: the taut fury of the language, the objectification of private anguish, the unusual distancing effected between feeling and image. As Celan himself expressed it in an early commentary on his poems: "What matters for this language . . . is precision. It does not transfigure, does not 'poetize,' it names and composes, it tries to measure out the sphere of the given and the possible."

In a public address delivered in the city of Bremen in 1958 after being awarded an important literary prize, Celan spoke of language as the one thing that had remained intact for him after the war, even though it had to pass through "the thousand darknesses of death-bringing speech." "In this language," Celan said—and by this he meant German, the language of death and the language of his poems—"I have tried to write poetry, in order to acquire a perspective of reality for myself." He compared the poem to a message in a bottle—thrown out to sea in the hope that it will one day wash up to land, "perhaps on the shore of the heart." For Celan, then, the poem is not a transcription of an already known world, but a process of discovery. He did not write solely in order to express himself, but to orient himself within his own life and take his stand in the world, and it is this feeling of necessity that sustains the dramatic conflicts which give his work its tension and vitality.

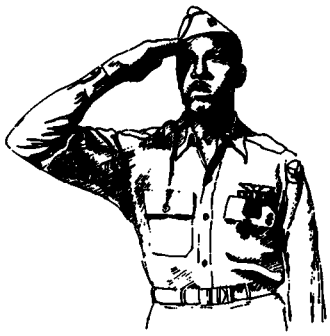
Both Celan's life and his attitude toward his art bear a striking resemblance to Vincent Van Gogh. Celan makes oblique reference to Van Gogh in several of his poems, and the kinship between the poet and painter is indeed quite strong; both began as artists in their late twenties after having lived through experiences that marked them deeply for the rest of their lives; both produced work prolifically, at a furious pace, as if depending on it for their very survival; both underwent debilitating mental crises that led to confinement; both committed suicide, foreigners in France.

In a 1946 essay on Van Gogh, Meyer Schapiro observed: "Struggling against the perspective that diminishes an individual object before his eyes [Van Gogh] renders it larger than life. The loading of the pigment is in part a reflex of this attitude, a frantic effort to preserve in the image of things their tangible matter and to create something equally solid and concrete on the canvas."

Celan used language in a way that is not unlike the way in which Van Gogh used paints, and their work is surprisingly similar in spirit. Neither Van Gogh's stroke nor Celan's syntax is strictly representational, for in the eyes of each the "objective" world is interlocked with his perception of it. Just as Van Gogh's painted objects acquire a concreteness "as real as reality," Celan handles words as if they had the density of objects, and he endows them with a substantiality that enables them to become a part of the world—and not simply its mirror.

Like Van Gogh's paintings, Celan's poems are often filled with intense religious feelings. But for Celan it is the religion of the abandoned, and he speaks with the voice of one forsaken by God. Negation, blasphemy, and irony take the place of devotion, drawing him even nearer to the source of his despair and yet allowing him to maintain an inner dialogue with his own Jewishness. For whatever the ambivalence of his beliefs, Celan always identified with his Jewish past, both as a link to his own suffering and as a kind of self-imposed exile from the Christian

A notorious chapter of black history in America



The Invisible Soldier

The Experience of the Black Soldier, World War II

Compiled and edited by Mary Penick Motley

Mary Penick Motley has accomplished a milestone in the written history of the black soldier in the United States army. She has recorded interviews with over 55 participants in World War II, interweaving their often shocking recollections to document a little known chapter of American history. "The cumulative effect of these interviews, conducted 30 years after the experiences described, is staggering . . . A carefully edited, unique contribution to our understanding of the black experience in America."—*Library Journal.*

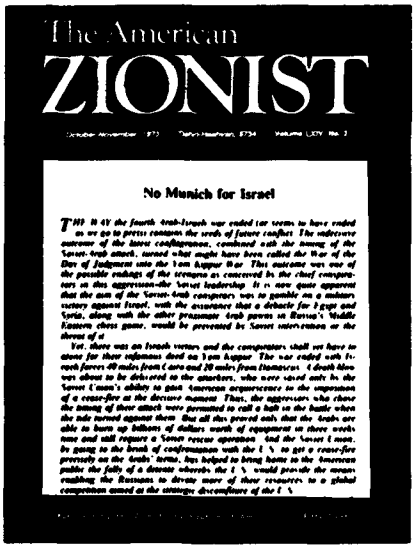
"Searing . . . a fascinating collection. The book will interest general readers besides taking its place as a valuable reference tool."—*Publishers Weekly.* *364 pages, $13.95*

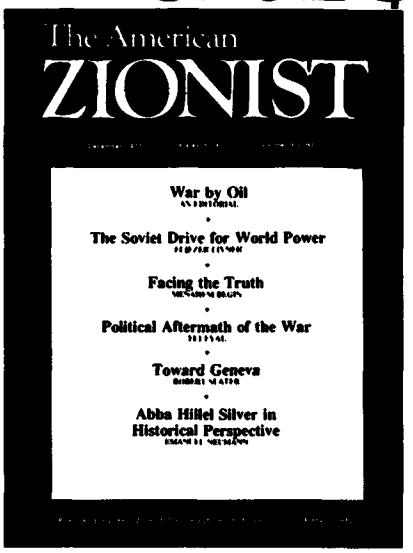
order directly from

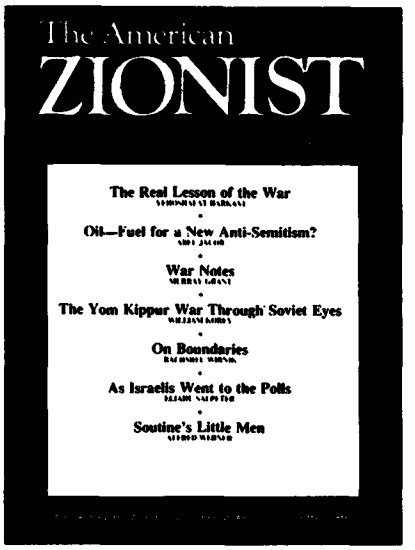
Wayne STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS, Detroit, Michigan 48202

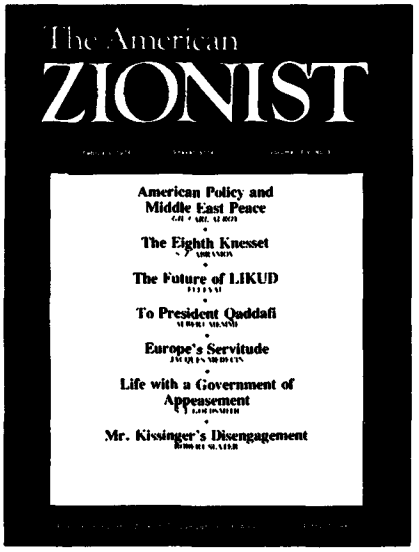
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

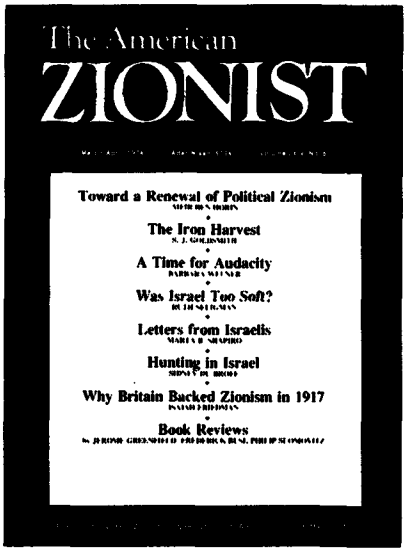
Is All This Worth $5 a Year?

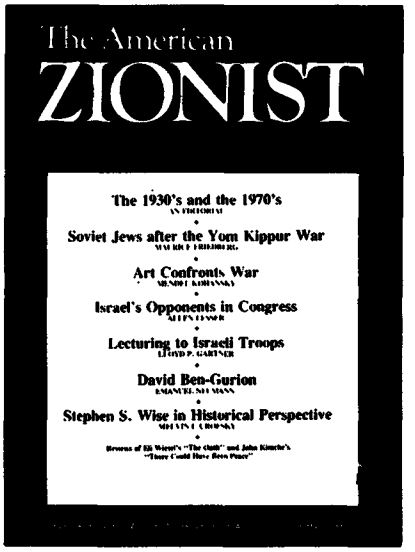


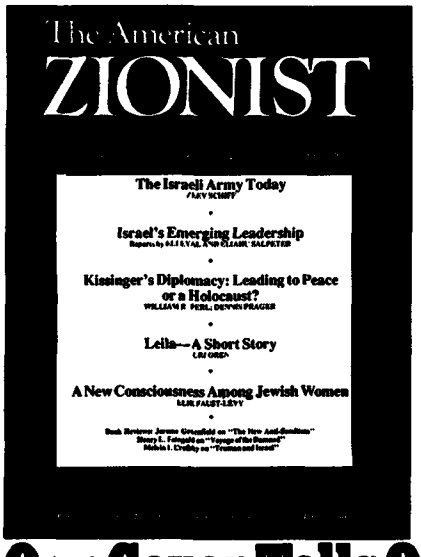


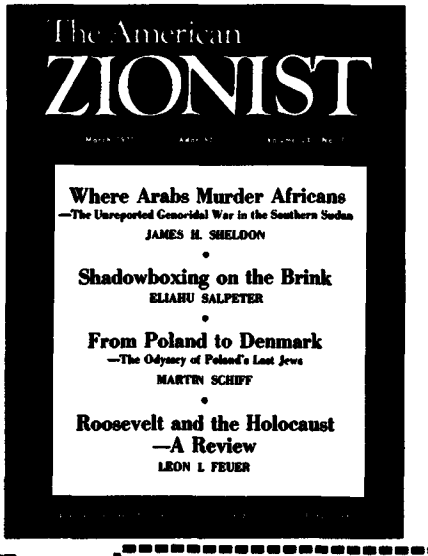


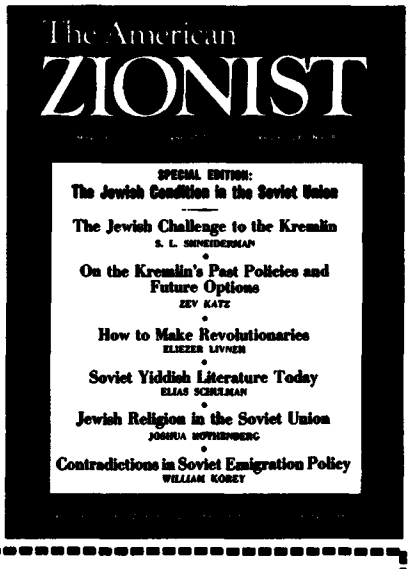











The American
ZIONIST
SPECIAL EDITION:
The Jewish Condition in the Soviet Union
The Jewish Challenge to the Kremlin
On the Kremlin's Past Policies and Future Options
How to Make Revolutionaries
Soviet Yiddish Literature Today
Jewish Religion in the Soviet Union
Contradictions in Soviet Emigration Policy

Our Cover Tells Only Half the Story. Subscribe Now and Get Our Current Issue Free!

THE AMERICAN ZIONIST
Subscription Department
ZOA House
4 East 34th Street
New York, N.Y. 10016

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY_____ STATE____ ZIP__

I enclose $5.00 for my one year subscription

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

thinking that to some degree had been responsible for the slaughter of the Jews. In one of his finest poems, for example, "And with the Book from Tarussa," he uses a quotation from Marina Tvestayeva as epigraph—"All poets are Jews"*—and elsewhere, as in the following poem, "Psalm," he gives full expression to what has been described as his negative theology:

No one kneads us again of earth
and clay,
no one incants our dust.
No one.

Blessed art thou, No one.
For thy sake we
will bloom.
Toward
thee.

We were, we are, we shall remain
a Nothing,
blooming:
the Nothing-, the
No-one's-Rose.

With
the style soul-bright,
the filament heaven-void,
the corolla red
from the purple word that we sang
over, oh over
the thorn.
(trans. by Joachim Neugroschel)

In the last decade of his life, Celan gradually refined his work to a point where he had begun to enter new and totally uncharted territory. The long lines and ample breath of the early poems give way to an elliptical, almost panting, style in which words are broken up into their component syllables, unorthodox neologisms are invented, and the reductionist natural vocabulary of the first books is inundated by references to science, technology, and political events. These short, usually untitled poems move along by lightning-quick flashes of intuition, and their message, as Michael Hamburger aptly puts it in his introduction to *Selected Poems*, "is at once more urgent and more reticent." One feels both a shrinking and an expansion in them, as if, by traveling to the inmost recesses of himself, Celan had somehow vanished, joining with the greater forces beyond him, and at the same time sinking more deeply into his terrifying sense of isolation:

Thread-suns
over the gray-black wasteland.
A tree-
high thought
strikes the note of light: there are
still songs to sing beyond
mankind.
(trans. by Joachim Neugroschel)

In the end, it seems, Celan's desolation became too great to be borne, as if, in some sense, the world too had vanished for him. And when nothing was left, there could be no more words:

You were my death:
you I could hold
when all fell away from me.
(trans. by Michael Hamburger)

Considering the enormous difficulties in translating Celan, both Joachim Neugroschel and Michael Hamburger deserve a good deal of praise for their work. Each of the two volumes has certain features not to be found in the other, and in its own way each serves as a valuable introduction to Celan. Neugroschel's book contains nearly a hundred poems and has the advantage of including the German originals in facing-text; Hamburger's book (with several translations also by Christopher Middleton) gives about sixty-five poems only in the English versions, but it also offers a helpful twelve-page introduction. The differences between the two translations are largely due to the differences between American and English rather than to poetic ability or knowledge of German. To my American ear, Neugroschel's American is sometimes better at rendering Celan's driven, unyielding tone than Hamburger's English. But Hamburger is often more intimate in his approach, and he is most successful in bringing across the more quiet, meditative poems. It is hard to imagine a definitive translation of any Celan work, and in the cases where Neugroschel and Hamburger have tackled the same poem, comparisons are instructive, not as a contest between translators, but as a means toward a better understanding of the poem. The two books complement each other, and for an interested reader without much German, it would be useful to have them both.†

Jerry Glenn's *Paul Celan* is the first full-length critical study of the poet in English, and what it lacks in inspiration it compensates for with hard work, a diligent quest for sources, and an ardent respect for Celan's poetry. Glenn's prose is plodding, and his unswerving textual approach to the poems is at times reminiscent of the efforts taken by Joyce scholars to keep their balance as they climb the stairs of Babel. But his principal observations are intelligent and well-founded. Against the tendency among German critics to ignore Celan's Jewishness, Glenn irrefutably demonstrates how Celan's shifting and often violent feelings toward Judaism affected his work. He also shows a subtle appreciation of some of the more elusive aspects of Celan's poetry, particularly Celan's technique of burying references within his poems, and Glenn's literary and biblical explorations are carried out with the patience that is required for tracing the intricate nexus of Celan's imagery. While lacking the nimble brilliance that Celan often seems to demand, his book is a solid and honorable work, and it establishes a good precedent for Celan scholarship in English.

There seems little question that as Celan's readership grows, more translations and more studies will be published. This is inevitable. For the already great interest in him today is not just the result of a passing fashion. Celan's place is secure, and he will be remembered as one of the truly great poets of our time.

---

* This is a line from Tvestayeva's "The Poem of the End." The full sentence reads: "In this most Christian of worlds/ all poets are Jews."

† Two other small Celan books in English should be mentioned, both of them fine translations: *Conversation in the Mountains*, Celan's only non-critical prose text, translated by Rosmarie Waldrop, and published by The Literary Supplement, London, and *Breath Crystal*, twenty-one late poems translated by Walter Billeter, published by Rigmarole of the Hours, Ivanhoe, Victoria, Australia.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Advising the President

PRESIDENTIAL ADVISORY COMMISSIONS. By THOMAS R. WOLANIN. *University of Wisconsin Press. 298 pp. $17.50.*

Reviewed by CHESTER E. FINN, JR.

WHAT is it about the para-governmental device known as the presidential advisory commission that so endears it to modern Presidents? Apart from their allure for the chief executive, are these bodies of any use to the nation?

Thomas R. Wolanin set out to answer such queries by examining every commission from Harry Truman's arrival in the Oval Office through Richard Nixon's first term. Although he employs a strict and elaborate definition—thereby omitting numerous panels and task forces indistinguishable to the layman from those he includes—it is remarkable how many there have been: between the President's Committee on Integration of the Medical Services of the Government (1945) and the Presidential Study Commission on International Radio Broadcasting (1972), 99 such groups in all were appointed. Truman sired 17, Eisenhower 9, Kennedy 12, Johnson 28, and Nixon 33. Ford, it appears, is doing his best to maintain the pace.

In the late 1960's, with the spread of public disenchantment with the Presidency, a skeptical view began to be voiced about these ever-proliferating advisory commissions and the motives of Presidents who create them. Elizabeth Drew once delineated eight such motives: "To obtain the blessing of distinguished men for something you want to do anyway; . . . To postpone action, yet be justified in insisting that you are at work on the problem. . . . To act as a lightning rod, drawing political heat away from the White House. . . . To conduct an extensive study of something you do need to know more about before you act, in case you do. . . . To investigate, lay to rest rumors, and convince the public of the validity of one particular set of facts. . . . To educate the commissioners, or get them aboard on something you want to do. . . . Because you cannot think of anything else to do. . . . To change the hearts and minds of men." ("On Giving Oneself a Hotfoot," *Atlantic,* May 1968.)

At the time Miss Drew wrote, the Kerner Commission on civil disorders had just reported; the other two controversial "crisis commissions" of recent years—the (Milton) Eisenhower panel on the causes and prevention of violence, and the Scranton task force on campus unrest—had yet to be named. In the opinion of many, these three bodies administered the final blow to whatever still breathed of commission credibility. Before their time, however frivolous many commissions may have appeared, and however self-serving the President's reasons for naming them, little apparent harm was done. The three crisis panels, however, demonstrated that a presidential advisory commission was not invariably a benign or neutral force. It could be actively injurious—magnifying problems, exacerbating tensions, and misplacing responsibility. Such a commission, one member of the Scranton group later wrote, "tends to function in a collective state of alarm, induced by its focus on pathology. . . . 'Crisis,' in the perception of the commission, comes to be accepted as the reason for being." (Martha Derthick, "On Commissionship—Presidential Variety," *Public Policy,* Fall 1971.)

Not surprisingly, the reports of these commissions harped on the severity of the crisis, traced its existence to fundamental defects in the society generally and in federal policies especially, and prescribed injections of moral leadership (by the President), large doses of tax dollars, and a program of national soul-searching as the proper treatments for the worsening malady. This was set forth in apocalyptic language aimed at the punchy headline and anguished editorial, an effect further dramatized in all

CHESTER E. FINN, JR., *is a research associate in the governmental studies program of the Brookings Institution.*

$1.95 AVON PAPERBACK

This novel of unsurpassed intimacy reveals a strong-willed and passionate woman who rises to unsuspected heights of compassion and endurance.

Anya's was an idyllic European youth filled with music, ballrooms and summerhouses. Then, a world gone mad with war, the terror of the death camps, survival and escape to America.

"A triumph"
—The New York Times Book Review

"Rich and brooding"
—Time

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

three cases by the frigid reception accorded the reports when they reached the White House.

This dismal record, however, has not restrained succeeding Presidents from continuing to appoint panels, task forces, and study groups of every description, nor has it kept many distinguished citizens from agreeing to serve on them, but the conventional wisdom about such bodies has been shifting from amused doubt to bitter disbelief. It is against such a darkening backdrop that Wolanin's revisionist interpretations are illuminating, if not altogether satisfying.

The extensive research summarized in his carefully documented study points to the conclusion that the three crisis panels were aberrations that have given the presidential advisory commission a largely undeserved bad name. The author contends that in fact most commissions between 1945 and 1972 came into being because the "President wants to act but is not sure how"; that they went about their business with independence, integrity, and high standards; and that they produced constructive and influential reports. Notwithstanding the bureaucratic limbo to which the Kerner, Eisenhower, and Scranton recommendations were consigned, most such documents "are not routinely ignored or buried by Presidents." To the contrary, "their recommendations are very often a substantial element in proposed or actually accomplished changes in federal policy." The evidence indicates that 80 per cent of the commission reports elicited a favorable response from the President, and two-thirds received "some substantial implementation" of their recommendations.

Causation is unprovable, but the circumstantial evidence in particular instances is compelling. The President's Committee on Foreign Aid (1947) was followed by the Marshall Plan. The President's Advisory Committee on a National Highway Program (1954) led toward the Interstate Highway system. The President's Advisory Council on Executive Organization (1969) charted alterations in the Executive Office of the President with lasting consequences. And, of course, the First Hoover Commission, which did not qualify for inclusion in this study, had a profound impact on the organization of the entire executive branch of the federal government. Dozens of other commission recommendations surfaced in messages to Congress, new legislation, and administrative action.

THE overall record, then, is far from unimpressive, provided one is not too fussy about whether what happened would have happened anyway, and assuming one is willing to overlook a few outright failures, some dubious ideas, and a number of disagreeable ex-cathedra pronouncements.

Not every topic lends itself to a commission, in Wolanin's view. Wrenching crises of the national spirit (e.g., the assassination of President Kennedy) and large sudden manifestations of problems with deep-seated causes and no ready remedy (urban riots, campus turmoil) are not the sort of thing commissions handle well, hence appointing one may aggravate or prolong the problem, tarnish the Presidency, and erode the prestige that is a principal asset of advisory panels. "Commissions are best used," Wolanin judges, "in situations where a President *wants* to do something about the problem and at the same time *can* do something about it."

But numerous issues satisfy those conditions. When, for example, the issue impinges directly on the self-interest of federal agencies and employees, it makes sense to ask advice from thoughtful outsiders rather than relying on the civil service; thus, we have had commissions on government pay scales, segregation in the armed forces, the adequacy of veterans' hospitals, and the effectiveness of foreign-aid programs. Other commissions have been entrusted with highly technical matters that beg for expertise: federal statistics, highway safety, budget concepts, and state workmen's compensation laws.

Many commissions have a somewhat different genesis, however, more visibly political yet perhaps not inappropriately so. Faced with a complex and disputed issue such as pornography, population growth and family planning, or widening drug abuse, a President understandably wants advice, and the nation may benefit from having the problem considered in an orderly, thoughtful, public manner by a group of respected citizens with diverse viewpoints. There is a fine line to be drawn between an issue that has ripened in such a way that a commission can coax the society toward workable consensus, and an issue so vague or violently contentious that a commission has little hope of doing more good than ill, but this just means that a President must act with discretion, not that advisory groups should be ended altogether.

Still another occasion—judging from Wolanin's list, perhaps the most common—for appointing an advisory panel arises when an interest group is pushing the White House to do more for it and the President has no stomach for the political and fiscal costs of either acceding or refusing. He responds with a prestigious board to look into the matter further. Thus there have been innumerable commis-

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE
Please include a COMMENTARY address label to insure prompt service whenever you write us about your subscription.
MAIL TO: COMMENTARY
165 East 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022
CHANGE OF ADDRESS
If you're moving, please let us know five weeks before changing your address. Place magazine address label here, print your new address below. If you have a question about your subscription, place your magazine address label here and clip this form to your letter
ATTACH LABEL HERE
name
address
city
state
zip code

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sions on higher education, medical care, the problems of the handicapped and retarded, veterans' pensions, housing, and women's rights, not to mention urban, suburban, and rural problems.

The tactical worth of naming a commission in such circumstances ought not to be discounted. The President's arsenal of possible responses is none too large. A commission is less of a drain on the Treasury than a bold new program. It requires no assent from Congress and is therefore speedy, flexible, and, at least initially, within the control of the White House. It is more convincing, even to a jaded public, than a mere speech, and more reassuring than a task force of White House aides. Most people deem it an honor to be asked to serve on such a panel, and do so with diligence and good will. Moreover, Wolanin's data indicate that some change in federal policy is more likely than not to follow in its wake.

The institution of the presidential advisory commission shows no signs of disappearing, nor would decreeing an end to it curb the tendency to find in every problem an excuse for a new federal program. In the final analysis, it is elected officials who must appraise the merits of what commissions urge them to do, and denying them that source of advice would not likely make their eventual decisions any wiser.

If commissions are here to stay, anyone wanting to know a great deal about them would do well to consult this book, which is a solid piece of scholarship, lacking only in two respects. I wish the author had recognized that the "crisis commissions" may have done more lasting harm than simply scarring the reputation of advisory panels. Educating the public scarcely deserves plaudits when the lessons are ill-conceived and the pedagogy divisive. And I wish he were willing to take some of the other commissions in his sample a shade less solemnly, for the enduring appeal of the conventional wisdom that he challenges stems in part from its recognition that at least a few of these 99 groups are just plain ridiculous.

Modern Mexico

Politics and the Migrant Poor in Mexico City

Wayne A. Cornelius. Nowhere is the world-wide population shift from rural to urban areas more marked than in Latin America, which has surpassed all Third World regions in urban population growth. In the first detailed analysis of political learning among rural-to-urban migrants in Mexico, this broadly comparative work breaks new ground in the study of rapid urbanization. Based on extensive research of political attitudes and behavior in six low-income migrant barrios, it offers a creative model for future studies of the local community as an arena for social and political action. $12.50

OTHER BOOKS ON MEXICAN SOCIETY

- **Politics and Privilege in a Mexican City**
  Richard R. Fagen & William S. Tuohy. "Combines a precise methodology, conceptual clarity, and imaginative thinking."—*American Political Science Review.* Cloth, $8.50; paper, $2.95
- **Atencingo**
  The Politics of Agrarian Struggle in a Mexican Ejido. *David Ronfeldt.* "A valuable and illuminating case study."—*The Hispanic American Historical Review.* "Careful research, perceptive analysis, an easy to read style."—*The Annals.* $10.00
- **Law and Social Change in Zinacantan**
  Jane Fishburne Collier. "A superior descriptive account of a specific legal system, it also contributes to a new and broadened conception of the nature of law."—*The Annals.* $10.00
- **Illness and Shamanistic Curing in Zinacantan**
  An Ethnomedical Analysis. *Horacio Fabrega, Jr. & Daniel B. Silver.* "Can serve as a model for approaching some important aspects of social life among primitive peoples. . . . An important contribution."—*South East Latin Americanist.* $10.95
- **Change and Uncertainty in a Peasant Economy**
  The Maya Corn Farmers of Zinacantan. *Frank Cancian.* "The empirical precision of the micro-economic analysis makes this study unique in economic anthropology as well as in the field of peasant responsiveness to change."—*The Americas.* $7.95
- **San Miguel**
  A Mexican Collective Ejido. *Raymond Wilkie.* "Provides insight into the economic life of a community at the base of the Mexican socioeconomic pyramid."—*Choice.* "A useful analysis with good temporal perspective."—*Human Organization.* $7.50
- **The Caste War of the Yucatan**
  Nelson Reed. "Exciting history as compelling and dramatic as the best of historical fiction. . . . Brilliant."—*The Los Angeles Times.* Cloth, $10.00; paper, $2.95

Stanford University Press

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Olympic has more vacations in Greece than anybody.

It isn't every day you go to Greece. So get the kind of vacation you really want.

Come with Olympic Airways.

We give you more than 200 fantastic vacations to pick from in Greece and the sunny Greek Isles. More tours than anybody. In all price ranges. What's more, we've got non-stop 747 service. Our own private terminal in Athens. And the lowest fares you can get on a scheduled airline.

Call your travel agent or Olympic Airways now.

Come on. You've got to live for today.

Olympic Airways Tour Dept.
888 Seventh Ave.
New York, New York 10019

Please send free color brochures on Greece and the Greek Isles.

Name

Address

OLYMPIC AIRWAYS

A Radical Feminist

AGAINST OUR WILL: MEN, WOMEN & RAPE. By SUSAN BROWNMILLER. *Simon and Schuster. 472 pp. $10.95.*

Reviewed by MICHAEL NOVAK

THE manifest thesis of this book may be simply stated: it is that the basic sexual relation between men and women is rape. Susan Brownmiller conflates the primal act of intercourse with an act of rape. She thinks of the penis as "a weapon to generate fear"—a powerful and dreadful weapon against which women "can never retaliate in kind." She compares "man's discovery that his genitalia could serve as [such] a weapon" with his discovery of the stone ax. Thus, she writes, "From prehistoric times to the present, rape has played a critical function. It is nothing more or less than a continuous process of intimidation by which *all men* keep *all women* in a state of fear." (The emphasis is Miss Brownmiller's.) Having thus terrorized women, men (in the earliest form of the extortion rackets) then offer them protection. This protection is called marriage. Its main objective is to turn women into "chattels" of the men they agree to marry only in order to defend themselves against the threat of rape.

These assertions are surrounded with much rhetoric, a great smoke screen of "research," evidence so selective and reasoning so tendentious that to contend against them is to involve oneself in intellectual corruption. The author's arguments cannot be taken seriously either as history or as journalism. They are myths in the service of propaganda. And indeed, *Against Our Will* is "nothing more or less" than a propagandistic attack on heterosexuality and marriage (and by extension the family) in the guise of an attack on rape. For in defining rape so broadly and demanding its eradication, what else can Miss Brownmiller be flirting with but the eradication of all sexual relations between men and women?

But *Against Our Will* is not merely propaganda against heterosexuality and marriage. Its implicit logic makes it a tract in celebration of lesbianism and/or masturbation. Lesbianism is not, in this logic, a "civil-rights" issue. It is, with masturbation, the ideal way of life for which *Against Our Will* is a disguised justification—ideal because these are the only ways of life from which men, and hence "rape," can be banished.

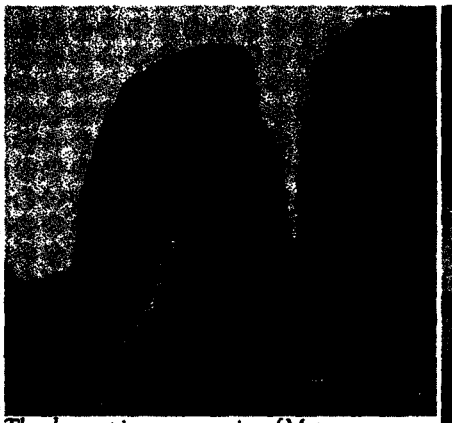
In its hatred of men, of sex between men and women, of marriage, of the family, in its contempt for women (trapped eternally in a state of fear and reduced to the status of victims), and in its apologetics for lesbianism and masturbation, *Against Our Will* is characteristic of the radical feminism of our time. Neither the New York *Times Book Review*, which chose this corrupt tract as one of the ten best books of 1975, nor *Time* magazine, which proclaimed Miss Brownmiller one of the Women of the Year (twelve women where one man usually is) seems to have the insight to get or the courage to face the author's point.

But most women do. Despite the enormous clanking of the best-seller machinery in the media and despite the ideological mushiness (or fear of feminist retaliation) among New York critics, *Against Our Will* has so far failed to make the major lists, or to be enthusiastically embraced by women readers. But there are other and more important signs of the refusal of most women to accept the vision radical feminism would impose. In voting down the Equal Rights Amendment, for example, the vast majority of the women of New York (a liberal state, it should be noted) were not endorsing rape, acquiescing in discrimination against them, or repudiating the idea of equal pay for equal work. They were expressing their understanding of what radical feminism, and its highly publicized spokeswomen like Susan Brownmiller, truly stand for, and repudiating *it*. One day the media may show an equivalent degree of intellectual honesty and moral courage.

MICHAEL NOVAK *is the author of, among other works,* The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics *and* Choosing Our King. *His new book,* The Joy of Sports, *will be published later this year by Basic Books.*

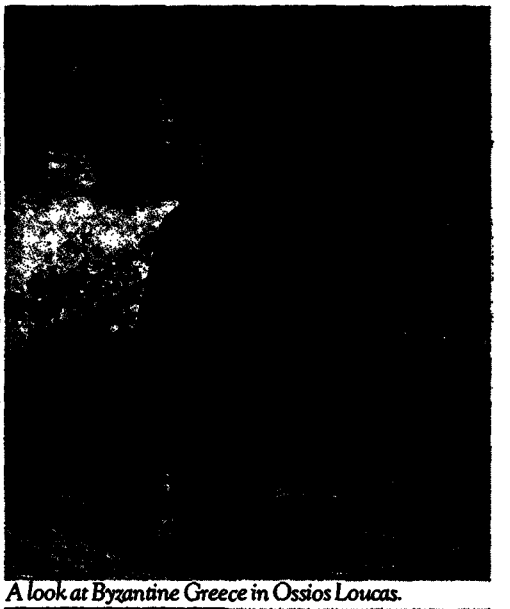
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Evzone Guard in Athens, and friend.



The skyscraping monasteries of Meteora.

Theatre, exactly as it was in 400 B.C.



A look at Byzantine Greece in Ossios Loucas.

Golden beaches kissed by the blue Aegean.

Greece has 1417 enchanting isles. With cruises and flights to many.

Delphi, ancient home of the Oracles.

There's no place on earth like Greece.

Greek National Tourist Organization
601 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017 (212) HA-1-5777
627 W. Sixth St., Los Angeles, CA. 90017 (213) 626-6696

Please send free color brochures on Greece and the Greek Isles.

Name

Address

City/State/Zip

My travel agent is

C

It's one European vacation you can still afford.

Beautiful resort hotels—with a beach on the sparkling Aegean—are still from $10 a day. For two.

Dinner of freshly caught red snapper and wine at a waterfront café is still around $4.

In Greece, amazingly enough, your hard-earned dollar is still worth a dollar.

Ironically, you're getting the most fascinating country on earth in the bargain.

You'll romp on golden-sand beaches. Swim in the bluest water you've ever seen. Cruise to fabled Greek isles. Dance to the soulful music of the bouzouki.

And hear the echoes of 4000 years of history at every turn. Places like Delphi and Knossos and Olympia where the ancient legends seem to come alive.

There's no place on earth like Greece.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

©1975 R. J. REYNOLDS TOBACCO CO.

New Salem Lights

Lowered "tar."

Same fresh taste.

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

12 mg. "tar", 0.9 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED